

Improving the School Building Delivery Process in Post Conflict Iraq

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**Ph.D Thesis**

**2017**

Improving the School Building Delivery Process in Post Conflict Iraq

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**Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements of the**

**Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**June 2017**

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Undertaking this PhD for me has been a truly life-changing experience and it would have been impossible for me to do it without the support and guidance that I have received from many people.

Firstly I would like to sincerely thank my supervisor, Dr Udayangani Kulatunga, for her patience, guidance, encouragement and advice that she has provided me throughout my time as her student. I have been extremely lucky to have a supervisor who cared so much about my work, and who responded to my questions and queries so promptly. Without her guidance and constant feedback this PhD would not have been achievable.

I would also like to thank Mohan Siriwardena my first supervisor who supported and guided me through my first tentative steps into the start of my research. My sincere thanks are also given to Professor Mustafa Alshawi for his support.

I wish to give my sincere thanks to the academic and support staff in the School of the Built Environment at the University of Salford for all their help and guidance. Their speedy response to all of my queries was much appreciated.

I thank all the experts and people for helping me gain access to the information in the data collection process. Special thanks to the interviewees and questionnaire respondents in the Iraqi Ministry of Education for giving me their valuable time and providing me with the invaluable information for my research.

A special thanks to my family. Words cannot express how grateful I am to my children, my daughter Zahra and sons Zain Al Abideen and Arif for bringing so much happiness, love and strength to me. I love my children they are simply amazing and I could not imagine my life without them. They make my life complete. To my late father and my late mother who would be so proud of my achievement to get to this stage. To my mother-in law Rene, your prayers for me have sustained me thus far, you are without doubt a wonderful woman. I would also like to thank all of my friends who supported me in writing, and incited me to strive towards my goal. Finally I would like to express appreciation to my beloved wife Anne who spent sleepless nights with me and was always my support in the moments when there was no one to answer my queries. With her endless tolerance and patience she has got me to this stage. Without her constant support and help, I would have never completed the PhD as planned. Having you beside me has added an enormous strength to my life.

## DEDICATION

*I dedicate this piece of research to my dearest late father-in law Alexander Guy who was an inspirational man and to my amazing children Zahra, Zain Al Abideen and Arif and finally last but not least my one and only beloved wife Anne.*

## ABSTRACT

School building delivery process has been affected by the prolonged armed conflicts that took place in Iraq. This effect has been demonstrated in delay or cancellation of delivering schools which impacts the children's education and safety. Iraq was subject to a number of wars that have left its infrastructure destroyed and Iraqi people devastated with the absence of peace, safety and police authority. In the post-conflict time when re-building the country starts, priority is given to re-building schools and reforming the educational system. This is because good educational system initiates peace, safety and prosperity in the country. Moreover, education diminishes racism and conflicts and eliminates the causes for which conflicts take place. Education also helps to spread the culture of accepting others whatever their religion, race and class are; it also provides a safe environment for the children where they are protected from the consequences of the war such as gangs, military militia and abduction. Therefore, the focus of this study is school building delivery process in post-conflict Iraq.

The study aims to evaluate and make recommendations for the school building delivery process in post-conflict Iraq. The evaluation of the process is carried out through identifying the strengths, challenges and recommendations of the school building delivery process. The study adopted a multiple case study as the research strategy. The stakeholders from both the government and the Ministry of Education were responders for the study. The use of a multiple-case study has allowed the researcher to ensure precision and validity. Semi-structured interviews were adopted as a data collection method as it is one of the methods of data collection that yield in-depth description and thorough explanation of the topic under investigation.

The findings show the school building delivery process has manifested some strengths in post-conflict Iraq such as it reflects Iraqi people's desire and willingness to re-build their country, restore peace and safety to the people, and establish the first step in building democratic Iraq. However, the process has also been found to have some challenges related to the consequences of the prolonged armed conflict such as the absence of law and police and court authority, dearth of funds, the culture that dominates the Iraqi society and shapes its people's relationships and behaviour, and the hierarchal patterns that overshadow work and

the relationships between departments and employees. The findings have also revealed that there is a lack of interaction between department and the government and the Ministry of Education; the matter which is deemed to affect the school building delivery process.

The study contribution to the literature of school building delivery process is significant because there is a scarcity in covering this topic in Iraq and in the Arab World in general. The other study contribution is that the phenomenon of school building delivery has not discussed in this way which focuses on the stages of school building delivery and the factors that impact this process. The study has also linked the challenges that a school building delivery process is facing in post-conflict Iraq to the political, economic, social and cultural factors that play the greatest role in making this process what it is. The study has made recommendations that are derived from the features of the school building delivery process gaps and complexities. The study has assumed that by changing the environment where schools are built and delivered, Iraq can extend the change to cover different areas such as hospital building delivery process, for example. These recommendations are based on the assumptions that when a war-torn society starts by making change in education, it can achieve the change in the whole society.

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.1. Research background

The most tragic issue about conflicts and wars is their long-term consequences. These consequences do not end with the official end of the conflict. They not only affect buildings, streets, schools and hospitals, but also education, health, physical infrastructure, power distribution, societal and cultural behaviour and education (Askari, 2012). However, the negative effects that wars and conflicts have on the fundamental standards (Fink, 2010) of morality and people's behaviour and mentality are the most catastrophic consequences of wars and conflicts. For instance, wars strengthen corruption in the post-conflict society (Ingram *et al.*, 2015). Post-conflict era is characterised with re-building the physical infrastructure of the country. (Eadie & Rees, 2015). The most negatively affected sector by wars and conflicts is education, in particular schools (Johnston, 2016). In the post-conflict society many schools are destroyed (Sweetman, 2005), the number of teachers has decreased either because of deaths or leaving the country to escape the conflict (Oudraat, 2011), classrooms become crowded (Dupuy & Peters, 2010), children are devastated and scared (Cooper & Vargas, 2008), school facilities are lacked (Osei, 2009), and teachers are not very qualified (Clarke & O'Donoghue, 2013). Politically speaking, the government is weakened (Loevinsohn, 2008) and the authority of the police is limited because all the fund is transferred to military actions and the policemen are sent for military missions (Jong, 2015).

In a post-conflict society efforts are made to re-build the country and its infrastructure and to re-create an atmosphere that allows people to go back to their normal life. Similar experiences and research on the topic of post-conflict countries and societies demonstrate that the best and more effective issue to start with when re-building a post-conflict society is education (Butcher *et al.*, 2015). There are good reasons to recommend starting with education to re-build a post-conflict society. First, education helps establish peace and eliminate the causes for which the conflicts have taken place (Fontana, 2016). Second, schools which are the central issues of education stand for the healthy places that protect children from being abused and used for military actions (Clarke, & O'Donoghue, 2013).

Third, schools also promote the culture of accepting others who are different and encourage inclusive learning (Christie, 2011). Rebuilding schools is believed to give hope to devastated people in the post-conflict era (Benard, 2008) and motivate them to overcome the catastrophic consequences of prolonged armed conflict that has destroyed the culture and the structure of the country. Re-building schools also gives people the feeling that the authority of the state and government is back which means the return of safety and security (Benard, 2008). However, re-building schools in a post-conflict country undergoes many difficulties which make achieving this project a hard task.

Re-building schools in a post-conflict country has its problems (Clarke, & O'Donoghue, 2013) which are related to the conflicts and their political, economic, financial, and administrative consequences. However, there are other types of problems which are pertinent to the structure of the society where the project is being established as well as to the cultural features (Clarke & O'Donoghue, 2013) which penetrate the administrative patterns and the relationships within the organisations that are in charge of re-building schools in the post-conflict time. Wars and conflicts can deepen the negative aspects in a society such as corruption and the hierarchal patterns of governments, bureaucracy, favouritism, power imbalance, the unequal distribution of decision-making power, authoritarian figure dominance: domination and subjection, and aggressive behaviour (Fink, 2010). These factors together make re-building schools in a post-conflict society a hard task, though indispensable as the first step in re-building a peaceful, settled and democratic society. Accordingly, building and delivering school is not only about placing blocks together; it is rather about facing challenges that occur in the planning, organising, implementing and legislative stages of the school building delivery process. These challenges have been created from different sources the most important of are the post-conflict time complexities and the culture of the society where the process is appearing.

## 1.2. The statement of the research problem

Iraq is a country that has been torn by wars and conflicts for long years not to mention the sanctions that were imposed on it. As discussed earlier in this chapter, Iraq's infrastructure has been destroyed and Iraqi people are expecting the process of re-building to start so they can restore peace and security which they have been deprived of for long years. The state of schools in Iraq can be summarised as follows: Schools that are partly destroyed, schools that are completely destroyed, and schools which are not destroyed but crowded either with

students or the displaced (Kopka, 2011). Re-building schools is a real start for building peace and democracy and of the return of police and government authority.

Like any post-conflict country, Iraq is facing difficulties when re-building schools. These difficulties spring from the political, economic, social and administrative consequences of the prolonged armed conflict on the one hand and also from the structure and culture of the Iraqi society and its traditions and values that affect the administration and the decision-making issues. In other words, the problem that Iraq faces in terms of school-rebuilding is twofold. First, conflict has left the country weakened as far as funds are concerned, politically torn, and economically vulnerable. Second, Iraqi culture is a collectivist culture which devotes loyalty to the group, tribe or sector rather than the public interest. The second problem has its roots in the Iraqi society and it overshadows any step to be taken in re-building Iraqi society.

Therefore, there is a need to establish a strategy of school building delivery that enables Iraqi society re-build schools in a way to overcome the challenges that have occurred after the conflict has ended and those which have been already present in the Iraqi society and whose impact has become worse after the end of conflict time. This strategy can foster the school building delivery process and make it more achievable. The strategy will be derived from the general atmosphere of the post-conflict Iraqi society which resembles other post-conflict countries in many aspects and will benefit from the experience of these countries. However, the strategy will also take into consideration the very peculiar nature of the Iraqi society and present recommendations that can be effective in the Iraqi society.

### 1.3. The aim of the study

The aim of this research is to develop a school building delivery strategy in Iraq. It is the intention of the researcher that the above strategy will help the Ministry of Education to improve the school building delivery process in the given circumstances that post-conflict Iraq has experienced and which has caused negative consequences at different aspects of life in Iraq. It has been essential, therefore, to survey the circumstances that have prevailed Iraq in the post-conflict era in order to understand and explore how these circumstances affect the school building delivery process.

In order to achieve the above aim, the following objectives are established for this research study.

### 1.4. The study Objectives

- 1- Evaluate the current status of school building delivery in post-conflict Iraq.

- 2- Explore the school building delivery process in general and with particular reference to Iraq.
- 3- Critically review the good practice and lessons learnt from international contexts that have improved the delivery of schools.
- 4- Explore the interaction between the stakeholders and the Ministry of Education in terms of school building delivery process in Iraq.
- 5- Produce a strategy for improved school building delivery process in Iraq.

#### 1.5. The research questions

To achieve the study aim and objectives the study will answer the following research questions:

- 1- What is the current status of school building delivery process in Iraq?
- 2- What is the school building delivery process?
- 3- What are the lessons learned from international contexts that have improved the delivery of schools?
- 4- What is the status of the interaction between the stakeholders and the Ministry of Education in terms of school building process?
- 5- What is the best strategy for improving delivery of school building in Iraq and that meets the needs and the requirements of the current era?

#### 1.6. The scope of the study

This study is scoped to include the school building delivery process in the post-conflict Iraq. There are many stakeholders who are responsible for this process in the Ministry of Education in Iraq. Therefore, this research focus will be these stakeholders that are in charge of the school building delivery process in order to investigate the challenges this process is facing in the light of the current political, economic, social, and cultural circumstances of post-conflict Iraq. These stakeholders provide detailed information about the school building delivery process and make recommendations that can foster this process. This study also aims to undertake interviews with 12 participants who are stakeholders in the school building delivery

#### 1.7. Contribution by this study

The contribution of this study is both at the knowledge level and at the practice level. At the knowledge level, this study contributes to the literature about school building delivery



process in post-conflict countries in general and in Iraq in particular. This study does not only provide information about the political and economic conditions that influence school building delivery process but also go further to investigate how cultural and social factors available in Iraq shape this process. The contribution of this study is also represented in surveying the Iraqi social fibre and how it impacts the relationships and performance within the Ministry of Education and among the stakeholders, and thus, the school building delivery process in post-conflict Iraq.

At the practical level, this study is aimed to establish a strategy that enables stakeholders and the Ministry of Education to face the challenges stated in the collated data through semi-structured interviews. This strategy has taken into account the political, economic, social and cultural context of post-conflict Iraq. In order to be applicable, any strategy should take into account the setting where it is applied.

#### 1.8. The structure of the thesis

**Chapter One** introduces the thesis and explains the background of the study, the statement of the problem, research aims, objectives and questions, the study scope, research methodology, and the contribution of the study.

**Chapter Two** presents a review of the studies that have dealt with the same topic and establishes the theoretical background of the current study. Studies have been reviewed about school building delivery processes in the world by post-conflict countries, the necessity of re-building schools after the conflicts have come to an end, and the challenges that governments in the post-conflict countries face when starting to re-build their infrastructure in general and schools in particular.

**Chapter Three** discusses the stages of designing research following Saunders et al (2015) and their Research Onion. Then the current research design will be presented. The research design of this study is justified in terms of the study aim and objectives and it explains why and how the selected philosophy, approach, strategy and data collection and analysis methods achieve the research objectives and answer the research questions.

**Chapter Four** presents how data collated from semi-structured interviews are analysed and how they are related to the research aim and objectives. It also includes the themes that thematic analysis has yielded after data have been transcribed and read thoroughly.

**Chapter Five** is concerned with the interpretation of the data analysed in Chapter Four and their significance to the study problem.

**Chapter Six** presents the conclusions drawn from the study and the recommendations that emanate from these conclusions. It is also about discussing how the data and the findings achieve the study aim and objectives and answer the research questions.

## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

#### 2.1 Introduction

Conflicts in a country do not only affect the physical infrastructure of that country but also the social and economic one (Dee, 2012). Hence, post- conflict reconstruction includes all aspects of life and not only the ‘block and mortar’ aspects (Stahn, Easterday, & Inverson, 2014). Post-conflict reconstruction aids the transition from war and conflict to peace in the countries that were torn by wars. This post- conflict reconstruction does not only include the physical infrastructure but also the social and economic system of the country (Newton, 2006). Iraq’s urgent need for a post-conflict school building is twofold. Firstly, the new post-conflict reconstruction contributes to mitigating the negative effects of the conflict and reactivates development in the country. Secondly, the new post-conflict reconstruction plays an important role in sustaining hope within the conflict-affected people and recreating hope and confidence of a better future (Schwartz, 2010). The area that this thesis sheds light on is school building delivery and the Iraq’s increasing need for a new style of school reconstruction after the conflict has been ended. There are some reasons which make establishing schools vital in post-conflict Iraq: Education is essential for every country especially for the post-conflict countries because it supports in reconciliation and peacebuilding (Paulson, 2011). Education has been negatively and severely affected in Iraq during the conflict and subsequent wars (Bixi, Lust & Woolcock, 2015). So, it is crucial to rebuild the educational system in a way that meets the needs of students who have been devastated and whose school calendar has been interrupted, and they have been kept by their parents at home for their safety, or may be some of them have been exploited and used for military purposes. In fact re-building education in the post-conflict period means building the foundations for stability, re-establishing faith in the new state, and changing political and social norms in a way to mitigate the conflict (Green, Lingard & Verger, 2016).

Additionally, the governments' perspectives on learning has become broader and subtler than 'chalk and talk' alternative. How learning is defined and perceived and how the students' roles have been defined as well as the relationship between the school architecture and the students' achievement and attainment all have changed (Higgins et al., 2005). The implementation of technology in education and the application of learning theories such as constructivism support the idea that establishing learning environment should cope with the tremendous changes that have taken place.

The context of the study is post-conflict Iraq. The landscape is that of a country that has been destroyed and torn by war and conflict. Iraq, like any other post-conflict country, faced challenges in reconstruction. These challenges include corruption, insecurity, weak infrastructure of communication and transportation, lack of basic services such as water, health and sanitation, and a macroeconomic environment which is unstable (Girod, 2015). The most affected area by the conflict in any country is education; namely schools. Education is debilitated as schools were destroyed completely or partially and they were used as shelter for the displaced (Karabera et al., 2017). To restore healthy society in these vulnerable post-conflict countries there is a need for a reconstruction of schools and the educational system in general ( UN Millennium Project, 2013) which gives people the capacity to survive the negative consequences of the conflict (Francis, 2011) and recognise the root causes that led to the conflict to avoid them (Ranga et al., 2017) as well as to build peace and tolerance in a war-torn society which once adopted violence to solve problems ( Salomon & Cairns, 2011).

It is also worth mentioning that what is meant by 'school building delivery' is schools in general. The term "school" in this thesis encompasses primary and high schools in post-conflict Iraq. This is because all types of schools experience the same process of building delivery, and they were equally negatively affected by the conflict.

This chapter will discuss Iraq's need for new systems of school building and the rationale for this. Lessons learned from other countries who have been through the same experience as Iraq will also be reviewed. There will also be a historical overview of the school building system and the significance of this system and its effect on education. The relationship between school building and the students' academic achievement will also be identified. The stages of the school building delivery process will also be reviewed to establish the theoretical background of the current study whose empirical part will be focused on surveying and examining the school building delivery process in post-conflict Iraq.

## 2.1. The Intertwining between school architecture and students' academic achievement and development

In many places of the world, building schools can be merely establishing a place that shelters the teachers when they are lecturing and the students while they are receiving information from the teachers. The definition of teaching and learning can be the foundation of such style of building schools. In other words, when teaching is viewed as passing information from the teacher to the students who are passively empty vessels to be filled with knowledge, policy maker will view school building as a place where this knowledge transmission takes place (Perkins & Brodwell, 2010). Other requirements will not be taken into consideration such as places for play, places for songs and music or spaces for sport. In fact, Knapp (2007) makes a distinction between two types of school building: authoritarian building and democratic building. The former type is dominant in the undemocratic societies, and they do not allow freedom and self-actualisation. They are not based on tolerating other people's perspectives and opinions. Democratic buildings, on the other hand, are people-oriented and they are tolerant and open and based on human scale. They also cultivate the development of open society and of individuals. Democratic buildings of school stimulate and encourage development in the individuals (Knapp, 2007). School buildings that have been common in Iraq are the authoritarian building. Schools building design reflects the political values that prevailed Iraq. Iraq witnessed a period of democracy absence and totalitarian regime where people were not allowed to express their feelings or viewpoints. Schools, in this case, reflected this dominance of totalitarianism. This reflection was manifested in the dominance of the teacher authority over the teaching process. Students were not allowed to express their viewpoint or interrupt the teacher. They had to obey and carry out the orders they were given. Texts, curriculum, and teaching methods all had to represent the political values and ideologies that were available in that period (Espinoza, 2013). Schools design, thus, was as simple as to facilitate the transferring of information from the authoritarian teacher to the submissive students (Espinoza, 2013).

According to Earthman & Lemasters (2013), school building influences the outcomes and performance of both students and teachers. In other words, in order to achieve academically, students must be in a good school building that promotes learning not prohibits it. Zane (2015) points out that there is a relationship between the physical environment of the school and the students' success and achievement. Zane (2015) has established a connection between the poor attendance of the pupils and the nature of the building and heating,

ventilation and air-conditioning. Sanoff & Walden (2012) have found a correlation between the adequacy of school environment and the students' behaviour and performance: students who attend in schools with newer and better facilities have achieved more than students who have attended in substandard schools. Colours and lightings are also important in affecting the students' mood and desire to attend in the class. Drab colours and bad lighting have been found to create depressive mood for both the teachers and the students (Sanoff & Walden, 2012).

Education Watch (2015) has concluded from a study which was conducted in 2013 that there was a strong relationship between the school cleanliness and the level of maintenance and the students' achievements. The low levels of maintenance and cleanliness have led to the following results: a decline in the students' achievement, a decline in the students and staffs' morale, and an increase in the level of students' illness and absence. Tanner (2014) has surveyed the possibility of establishing green schools in the USA and described this experience as useful not only for the environment but also for the learners, teachers and the process of learning. Green schools, according to Tanner (2014), improve the quality of indoor air, use better lighting strategies, improve classroom acoustics, and encourage habitat protection. All these figures that have been promoted and improved are found to influence the learners' academic achievement. For example, adequate air circulation is essential for healthy learning and for learning. There are two factors that contribute to air pollution: reducing ventilation and using sealants that produce pollution. Research shows that learners and teachers who stay in air-polluted schools always suffer from mental fatigue, irritation and rash (Tanner, 2014).

Inadequate school indoor environment can affect the children's health: noise, crowding, temperature and lighting. In crowded classrooms, children are exposed to high stress levels, their academic achievement is hindered and behaviour problems increase (Jackson & Kissinger, 2013). The link between the school architecture and the students' academic achievement and behaviour has been discussed by many studies in the social science (Knapp, 2007). Knapp (2007) argues that educational administration and funding agencies can make profit when establishing a school only if they have obtained updated information about the connection between the school architecture and the students' performance and achievement so they can make good choices and decisions on how to spend the money for value.

Nevertheless, the central question is about whether post-conflict countries can afford building schools that meet the standards discussed above. In fact, what differs in this case is priorities. In other words, in a post-conflict society that is financially exhausted, priority is given to

establishing the school building at an early stage and, then, after economic recovery greater attention is paid to a standard design of schools (Dobbins, 2007).

## 2.2. Iraq's dual need for well-built schools

The need of Iraq for school rebuilding is twofold. The first one is a need shared by all the countries for physical environment that promotes learning and enhances the children's achievement. The second need emanates from Iraq being a country that has witnessed wars and civil conflicts, and rebuilding school is required to support peacemaking and help the conflict-affected generations recover from the negative and destructive consequences of war.

After the war and conflict phase has come to an end, the post-conflict phase starts when the economic, social and physical and political foundation and infrastructure of the country are re-built (Dupuy & Peters, 2010). Rebuilding does not include physical foundation; it is also rebuilding confidence and peace-making. It is about enabling the devastated generations to resume their pre-conflict life and survive the impact of war. One of the factors that contribute to the healing of the conflict-affected generations of the negative consequences of war is the social and economic reforms such as improving distribution of social goods like education. This also can accelerate the process of peace making (Dupuy & Peters, 2010). In addition to the effects of wars and conflict such as lack of sanitation, there are other factors that affect education such as unemployment, lack of funding, and lack of infrastructure. Moreover, since education is a source of income and power, any deteriorating in the state of education in the post-conflict time can lead to a more tension and inequalities (O'Donoghue & Clarke, 2013). O'Donoghue & Clarke (2013) identify some advantages of education in the post-conflict time:

- Education can protect children from violence and exploitation as well as harassment since post-conflict times can still be very dangerous
- Education can protect children psychologically by giving them the hope to return to stability and encouraging them to use and develop social skills that help them overcome the trauma of war time
- Education can help the war-affected society restore normalcy and provide social and psychological care that supports in unifying the divided communities, enhancing tolerance and starting the process of peace making
- Education can reopen the door for the development of investment such as the investment of girls' education which can be at the family levels and society levels

- Education can open the door for a change in the economic and social situation of the poor families. One of the ingredients for building democracy are active citizens and strong societies which can be achieved through literacy.

Hence, the starting point of re-building the Iraqi society is through education which can be achieved by school re-building.

### 2.3. The present state of education in Iraq as a post-conflict country

This part of the literature review discusses the state of school building delivery process in post-conflict Iraq and the circumstances that control this state as well as the challenges that make school-building delivery delayed and even cancelled; the matter which hampers the process of school building.

#### 2.3.1. Iraq between prosperous living standards and lack of food and medicine

Iraq is one of the countries that has witnessed turbulent changes in the political, social and economic life due to the wars and internal conflicts where Iraq was a part of them. Among the most-affected-by- war element is education as it is always a reflection of how healthy a country is (Power, 2014). For example, between 1970s and 1980s Iraqi education system was deemed as the best one in the Middle East. Between the 1960s and 1990s a great progress was made in terms of enrolment at all levels of education. By 1980, Iraqi educational system achieved near universal primary enrolment (UNESCO 2003, UNICEF/World Bank, 2003). However, the collapse of the Iraqi educational system started since the 1990s as Iraq was engaged in three main conflicts and subject to the international sanctions for a decade ((UNESCO 2003, UNICEF/World Bank, 2003). Six weeks before the Gulf War Iraqis had the highest standards of living in the Middle East, which was manifested in free health care and free education and the level of literacy reached 80 percent (Parenti and Phillips, 2001). University students, both genders, also benefitted from scholarships which enabled them to study at Iraqi universities or abroad. (Parenti and Phillips, 2001). In 1990, sanctions were imposed on Iraq; which led to a more deteriorating in the general aspects of life and, hence, in education and the educational system.

Prior to the sanctions, 93% of children in urban areas attended elementary schools. Nevertheless, sanctions were a turning point which dramatically diminished these figures. During sanctions, less than 75% of children attended schools. Living standards fell as teachers reported that 25-40% of students were absent each day due to hunger/disease. Teachers began to moonlight as taxi drivers and other 24-hour jobs to supplement their



\$3/month salaries (Gottstein, 1998). The features of the educational system were: severe lack of books and pencils, deteriorating buildings and malnourished students, who when attended school, found it difficult to concentrate (Gottstein, 1998). Sanctions enforced on Iraq marked the beginning of an era of underdevelopment and deterioration ( Not only living standards and educational system were affected by the subsequent conflicts and the sanctions enforced on Iraq but also the system of school building, which is, in fact, related to both the economic, political and educational systems in the country.

### 2.3.2. School Building Delivery Process: Past and Present

During the 1970s and 1980s the school building process in Iraq took place through stages that were influenced by the hierarchal pattern of authority in Iraq. These stages started in the Ministry of Education where the General Directorates stated their needs for a number of school buildings in a particular area. This statement was directed to the Ministry to be part of their schedule for the next meeting. At another stage the statement was sent to the Ministry of Planning which would assess the proceeding against the national financial budget (UNESCO, 2003; UNICEF/World Bank, 2003). Ministry of Housing and Construction would suggest the design of the new schools which was one of the pre-prepared or typical standard school designs. At this stage, plans, architectural sketches with a Bill of Quantities and the technical specifications would be announced at a later stage (UNESCO, 2003; UNICEF/World Bank, 2003). The 1980s witnessed a dramatic change in the system of school building as the National Centre for Engineering and Architectural consultancy (attached to the Ministry of Housing and Construction) prepared new studies in coordination with the Ministry of Education. These studies aimed at setting standard criteria that would be used while based on the drawing of the sketches and architectural plans. There was a plan to design schools in untraditional way (UNESCO, 2003; UNICEF/World Bank, 2003). In other words, school design was according to ready-prepared models and patterns which were applied to all areas and students without taking into consideration the special needs of every area and of students as well as teachers. The aim of establishing schools in this period of time was to enable the teacher transfer knowledge to the students who were deemed as passive recipients of knowledge. Other issues were not taken into account such as entertainment halls, music halls, places for special-need students, colours, lightening and heating.

### 2.3.3. 1990s-2003: Wars and sanctions – School buildings

Between 1990s-2003, the schools that were built before either demolished or damaged because of the war. This devastating situation was not exclusive to school buildings, but it extended to include desks, printing facilities, textbooks and school aids. For example, in the south central region of Iraq, 1/3 of the schools were severely damaged by bombs. It was stated by the UN that there was a need for 300,000 new desks, rehabilitation for 30,000 schools and a need for 5,000 new schools (Gottstein, 1998). The most catastrophic outcome was that not only the physical buildings were damaged or destroyed, but also the quality of teaching and learning declined. UNESCO, 2003; UNICEF/World Bank (2003) describe the situation of education in Iraq between 1990s-2003 as deteriorating of teaching and learning conditions, eroding of teacher quality, curriculum becoming outdated and distorted, and educational development coming to a standstill. The internal efficiency was also impacted by poverty as the students' poor attendance was reduced to poverty as more of the direct costs of provision were transferred to households despite the official policy of free education (UNESCO, 2003; UNICEF/World Bank, 2003).

After 2003, Iraq was under a new administrative setup. As a result, many sectors of the country were reviewed with the hope of improving them. The education sector also underwent similar developments. In this regard, the absence of a coherent process framework to enable the effective and efficient procurement of school buildings is identified as a major drawback (Watenpaugh et al., 2003).

### 2.3.4. The current situation of school building in Iraq

The challenge in the present Iraq is that to restore the healthy educational system in terms of the high figures of literacy and attendance, and to maintain a high-quality of teaching and learning. The most important issue is to pay a great attention to the school building delivery process and transform it from an era of underdevelopment to an era of development and efficiency. School architecture and building system, as mentioned above, are crucial factors, as O'Donoghue & Clarke (2013) claim, in protecting children from violence and exploitation as well as harassment, protecting children psychologically by giving them the hope to return to stability, helping the war-affected society restore normalcy, and providing social and psychological care that supports in unifying the divided communities, enhancing tolerance and starting the process of peace making, reopening the door for the development of investment; and opening the door for a change in the economic and social situation of the

poor families. Good- quality education is linked with good school buildings. Restoring a healthy educational system, therefore, means restoring and developing the human and social capital Iraq needs for a strong economy and cohesive society (UNESCO, 2003). The real start of all these can be by efficient procurement of school building. (Watenpaugh et al., 2003). According to O'Donoghue & Clarke (2013), no country could reach sustained economic growth without achieving near universal primary school education. This indicates the significance of education not only in teaching / learning areas but also in the economy of the country. The consequences of conflict are devastating and they form obstacles that hinder development in education such as psychological, physical and social consequences. The lack of infrastructure, unemployment and lack of funding aggravates the problem (O'Donoghue & Clarke, 2013). In other words, education is a determinant of income and power and its deterioration can lead to intensifying social tensions, entrenching intolerance and creating inequality (O'Donoghue & Clarke, 2013). According to Davis (2004), one of the issues that should be addressed in a post-conflict country is that whether education should be a means to return to normalcy or a radical departure. Davis states that in the countries where the conflict was inter-state, education in the post-conflict era will be a return to normalcy. However, when the conflict is intra-state, education will be a radical change or departure. In fact, the situation in Iraq is so complicated as the country requires education for both returns to normalcy and radical departure because it has been devastated by different types of conflicts and turbulences.

The World Bank (2005) believes that in such circumstances, education contributes to peace building. The World Bank (2005) recommends the following steps to be taken in a post-conflict country: 1) Educational reform should start as early as possible the process of rebuilding, 2) Focus should be on capacity-building ( Capacity building is a ' conceptual approach to organisational development that focuses on understanding and surrounding the obstacles that encumber organisations from realising their development goals while enhancing the abilities that allow them to achieve measurable and sustainable results' (Awofeso, 2012, p. xvi), 3) Educational reform takes years to be achieved; which necessitates the involvement of local citizens in the process. UNESCO (2011) has also called for an early educational reform and an early integration of education in the process of peace building. Another issue which is equally important in the post-conflict period is restoring the feeling of security that the citizens, especially the young ones, have been deprived of during the conflict times since war is the real threat of human security (Dupuy & Peters, 2010).

UNESCO (2011) also recommends what is called peace education in the post -conflict period. The aim of developing peace education is to mitigate the psychological consequences of the long-term conflict in the country torn by conflict and to cultivate the culture of peace. This education is based on the assumption that human beings can accept diversity and regard human beings and their rights to live in peace and build the future community. Taking these features as a point of departure, UNESCO (2011) considers that human beings can be influenced by calls for peace and human rights (Ahrari, Zaremohazzabehi, & Othman, 2016). UNESCO (2008) defines peace culture as styles of behaviour and manners that can be mediated between individuals, nations and groups. The most important target of peace education is the youth who are the most vulnerable group of the people affected by war because they are juvenile in an enthusiastic way and because they are easily abused. According to UNICEF, two settings for peace education to take place can be distinguished i.e. inside the schools and outside the schools (Ahrari, Zaremohazzabehi, & Othman, 2016). UNICEF has also reported that it is endeavouring to obtain recognition to make peace education a curriculum issue not only for the post -conflict time but for all schools in general (Ahrari, Zaremohazzabehi, & Othman, 2016)

Based on the above discussion, Iraq is facing great challenges during the post-conflict period; one of which is represented in the fact that it should embark on an educational reform which supports the country in peace building and establishing healthy society and substantial economy. The post-conflict period is also dangerous because violence and political instability can persist even after the formal end of the conflict (Langer & Brown, 2016). There are other features of post-conflict, so the country should work hard to meet all the needs and cope with all the severe condition. However, the most urgent task that should be performed in Iraq is rebuilding the educational system. The early development of the educational system helps the country to recover because education is proven to be a tool for peace making development. School rehabilitation and building is the start point of educational reform. The question is what types of schools does post- conflict Iraq need?

#### 2.4. The future schools for future Iraq

Schools in the developing countries have some features in common. One of these features is the class size which is two or three times larger than the equivalent class in the developed countries. These classes are overcrowded in the sense that classes that were designed for 40 students were accommodating 70 (Harber & Davies, 2006). Lockheed & Levin, (2012)

conclude that creating effective schools is more difficult in the developing countries than in the developed countries because the schools in the former lack the minimum base or input to be schools, while in the latter schools function adequately. They also recommend that achieving effective schools in the developing countries requires three issues to be achieved: the will to change, facilitating conditions and basic inputs. The inadequacy of the schools in the developing countries emanates from different elements. For example, inclusive education or culture is not available in the sense that disabled students will be asked to attend in the mainstream classes without taking into account their special needs and the special assistance they require. There are no places or no equipment for hearing impaired children (Lamichhane, 2015). In developing countries 90 percent of disabled children are deprived of gaining access to education (Lamichhane, 2015). However, gaining access to schools is not the whole story for disabled children; the important issue is accommodating these children and their needs (Lamichhane, 2015). UNESCO expresses concern that in the Asian countries special needs children face the threat of exclusion and discrimination, and schools there are not prepared for inclusive education (Cheung & Hui, 2007). The other difficulties that face disabled children in the developing countries schools are inadequate resources, lack of funding, inaccessible buildings and lack of appropriate curricula (Cheung & Hui, 2007).

#### 2.4.1. How should schools be built according to samples and experience from developed countries?

Decades ago, the main focus in establishing schools was on guaranteeing access for all children in primary schools, nowadays, the major concern is to improve the quality of education in schools. This concern is shared between developed and developing countries (Reddy, 2007). The Global Monitoring Report (2005) emphasises the importance of a high quality education which means high quality in the teaching/ learning process. High quality education leads to economic growth and social development because when the learners' cognitive skills are developed they can cope with the labour market and excel in finding ways to perform tasks and achieve more in their areas. Moreover, when there is a high quality in education, students' attainment and attendance will be perfect, and that will reduce the rates of repetition or drop out (UNESCO, 2005). Reddy (2007) explores what "quality" means in education. The word possesses a descriptive and normative meaning. "Quality" can mean 'defining essence of an entity': when someone speaks about the 'quality' of a classroom, they speak about the classroom essential characteristics. In education, 'quality' means a degree of excellence, and it may include two aspects: judgement of worth and a position on an implied scale of good/bad. It can also denote the 'good' or excellent. In addition to these semantic usages of the word 'quality', there are other six meanings that can be ascribed to education:

- Quality as reputation: this points to the consensus of low and high quality. It is usually used to refer to institutions which provide high quality education. This type of quality is based on information about the inputs and the outputs of an educational institution.
- Quality as inputs and resources: In this case, high quality is perceived in high levels of the provision of buildings, facilities, healthy classrooms and halls that meet the needs and the special needs of the students. Input points to the characteristics of teachers, students and the rest of the staff.
- Quality as process: this type of quality suggests that not only resources and quantifiable inputs determine the quality of education, but also the interaction that takes place between the teachers, students, technology and administrators. In other words, it is about the quality of life and activities in the school.
- Quality as content: This suggests the attitudes, body of knowledge and skills which a certain country intends to teach to their students through the national curriculum. It is about what a country wants its students to learn and be competent with.
- Quality as outputs/ outcomes: this type of quality is about the consequences of education which is a concern all stakeholders share. This quality is measured by the students' cognitive achievement, rates of competition, and entrance ratios to the next level of education. Outcomes of education can also refer to the long-term consequences of education such as employment, economic growth and changes in attitudes and behaviour. It is about how education can change a society and its members' attitudes and perspectives.
- Quality as value added: This points to the degree to which the school and its norms have changed the students' attitudes/behaviour or performance.
- Quality as selectivity: This means that the school which is exclusive or selective is the school that provides a higher education (Reddy, 2007).

UNICEF (2000) defines school quality via five dimensions:

- Healthy and well-nourished students
- Environment that is secure, safe, gender sensitive and adequate resources
- Content which is reflected in effective teaching/learning, relevant national curriculum and materials that promote learning and the acquisition of cognitive skills.
- Processes: where well-trained teachers use learner-centred approaches in well-managed classrooms, and

- Outcomes: which are about the students' achievement, attitudes and acquired skills (UNICEF, 2000).

Moreover, school building, laboratories, school furniture, school supplies, and class sizes are deemed as basic indicators of the quality of a school as Table 1 demonstrates:

Table 1.1: Some indicators of school quality. Adopted from Reddy (2007, p. 63).

Example of Indicators (Input)	Outcome
Condition of school building	Achievement in key subjects at major points in system
Condition of teacher housing	Percentage of grade group graduating
School furniture	Percentage students obtaining examination results
School supplies	Expectations and attitudes of people
School laboratories	Absenteeism

Therefore, school building and furniture are essential element that impact the students' achievement, attendance and attitudes. UNICEF (2006) recommends the building of child-friendly schools which are assumed to meet these expectations. Not only the school should be child-friendly, but also children should be involved in the design project of the school. The children's involvement is essential in determining the school design in order to overcome the conservatism of the adults. Children are the main users of the school building, and when they participate in designing its building they become satisfied users which leads to more achievement (Higgins et al., 2005).

Sometimes the establishment of child-friendly schools can be based on converting existing schools into child-friendly schools. The risk of doing this exists in the issue whether these already existing schools are good enough to be the base for a child-friendly school (UNICEF, 2006). In the developed countries, schools do not only function as primary catering for pupils up to the age of 12, or secondary between the age of 12 to 19, but they also can be vocational training centres for both the youth and adults. Schools can also function as meeting and community places as well as learning centres for adults (Practical Action). According to UNICEF (2006), schools are more than 'bricks and mortar'; schools should be child-friendly in the sense that: 1) they should increase access and attract students, 2) they should improve attendance, retention and completion rates, 3) they should enhance the students' learning achievement, 4) they should provide inclusive and welcoming environment

for all the children; 5) they should provide positive learning environment for the children who are disabled, 6) they should cultivate a sense of community, 7) they should give the parents and the community the opportunity to participate in the school, and 8) they should cultivate harmony between the school and the community.

Because the design of school affects the students' behaviour and achievement, there are a number of issues that should be taken into consideration when establishing a school. The first issue is the space. Because schools differ in the number of students to accommodate, it is advisable that  $1.3\text{m}^2$  is allowed per student and two meters between the first row of students and one of the walls for the teacher's desk, board and space for everybody to walk. It is not recommended to have a class in an area less than  $40\text{m}^2$  unless the class will accommodate 20 students (Practical Action). In the rural areas, one or two rooms are needed for one or two teachers and another one for storage. When the school is used as a community centre, there will be a need for one classroom to be larger than  $40\text{m}^2$  i.e.  $80\text{m}^2$  to accommodate more than 100 people seated or standing in a row (Practical Action). In secondary schools rooms need to be larger because after they finish their work, secondary students and teachers move in a circulation, so corridors are needed to accommodate this circulation. Moreover, in both secondary and larger primary schools there is a need for more facilities such as library, assembly hall. General office, dining room and a room for workshops (Practical Action).

In terms of the siting of a school, a level ground is preferred to a sloping ground because the design of school on a sloping ground requires using a lot of stairs; which is not practical in school building. Moreover, when selecting the ground for establishing a school, care should be taken that the area is a drained one and is not exposed to the danger of flooding. Although trees near school can be useful in the hot weather, trees can be dangerous in the case of strong storms. Building a school near a road also can be a hazard for primary school pupils (Practical Action). For road safety and security, school site should be close to where the children live (Bonner et al., 2011).

In terms of cost, both community and the government want cost-effective school building in order to be able to afford for building other schools. However, building schools cheaply can be risky. School building cost is not only about building schools, but it is also about maintaining these schools while they are in use. If, at the beginning, schools are built using cheap materials, the school will pay more later in maintaining, rehabilitating and repairing. Materials used in school building should also cause comfort to the users, for example, using



cheap material for building the roof can cause the heat to penetrate to the users in a hot weather or flimsy roof can let the water leak in winter (Practical Action).

Community plays role in maintaining the school when it is finished. Community members and parents should be asked about their points of view and perspectives about how the school will be like. As mentioned above, schools can be community training and learning centres, so parents and other community members' points of view are important (Practical Action).

UNICEF (2006) has outlined the basic planning and design standards for education buildings:

- Structure: the structure of the child-friendly school building should be stable and weather proof. The building should also be comfortable and easily exited in case of emergencies. It should also be in tune with the environment and social and cultural context.
- Administrative offices: Having separate administrative space in the school building maintains the privacy of both the students and the teacher to work at their pace. It is recommended that there is a proximity between the students' classrooms and the administrative officers in order to monitor the students' activities and establish what is called 'safety through transparency'.
- Safe water: Safe water should be available and a proper plumbing infrastructure supports the provision of safe water. In the cases where safe water cannot be provided through pipes, a well is recommended in the school compound.
- Hygiene facilities: the facilities for children to wash their hands should be always available. This can be achieved by the provision of soap and water at all times during the school day.
- Toilets/latrines: separate toilets or latrines should be available. Cleanliness and privacy as well as safety should be taken into account when designing the toilet facility.
- Light, air, sun, glare, reflection, humidity, noise and odour: Good fresh air circulation is needed in the classroom to avoid heat and humidity. Proper sunlight should also be available, so 20 percent of the classroom floor should be windows. Electricity should always be available to provide light and the energy to operate equipment. Schools should not be exposed to glare or reflection. They should be far from the sources of noise and pollution or odours. If this is the case, measurements should be taken to mitigate the consequences.

- Colours: colours in school should align with the cultural preferences. Colours should also match the function and role of the place. For example, brighter colours can be used for corridors and play areas. Learning places should be light and relaxed in colours, not gloomy or dark.
- Safety provision: Fire prevention and places for evacuation should be part of the school building programme. The construction materials should be free of any hazardous issue to the children. All types of waste should be removed after the school building has finished. Schools, for safety reasons, should not be close to industrial hazard.
- Health provision: Schools should at least have a first aid kit and a person who deals with emergency cases. The proximity to a health centre gives the opportunity to a periodical visits of medical personnel to the school and to take children for treatment and sorting out other problems.
- Library: A space in the child-friendly school should be allocated for reading books and using other resources. This supports the teaching/learning activity. The library area should be accessible but also in a quiet area away from noise.
- Landscaping: The area that surrounds the school is often a neglected area by the government, though it is very essential for learning and behaviour. Trees have a calming effects on human beings and also they have a positive effect on the environment as they filter sun, dust and noise and they also beautify the environment. UNICEF has also identified some additional functional standards for a child friendly school
- Flexible spaces: there should be spaces between the classes and in the classroom itself. These spaces allow group work and discussion and manual projects.
- School library and resource room: This facility allows the children to enhance learning. It is also linked with the community in the sense that the local residents can visit the library or the resource room and learn about history or handicraft as well as culture.
- Bathrooms: Separate bathrooms for girls and boys should be provided. They should be close to the classrooms for safety.
- Relaxation rooms close to learning areas: At the lower levels of education, children need a place to play by their own or to reflect. Providing rooms which mimic home is

very essential because they create a friendly environment for children at early stages of education.

- Individual spaces: Because children learn through different styles, the provision of spaces where children can study or reflect is essential.
- Open spaces: They allow children to exercise physical activities and be in contact with the environment. Open spaces can be designed as playgrounds, decks, orchards, or trellises. The school community can also access these spaces for town or local meetings or any other cultural events.
- Kitchen: this is to give space for preparing school meals in a hygienic place away from flies and pollution.

## 2.5. Lessons to be learned from post-conflict countries' experience with school building delivery process

South Sudan witnessed a number of conflicts and wars the last of which ended in 2005 when the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed in Kenya. This agreement brought an end to 22-year conflict between the North and the South. In 2011 a referendum took place in January and then independence in July 2011 (Gichuhi, 2015). Like any other post-conflict countries, South Sudan has been fragile and unable to deliver to its people core functions such as security or basic services such as education. To reform the educational sector depends on the development of effective national educational planning system. This system should start early even in an unstable political environment, and it should continue through progressive stages. When the country moves along the planning continuum, the challenge becomes to develop policy instruments that connect goals to the provision of inputs, national financing strategies and the involvement of stakeholders even parents and community (Gichuhi, 2015). Since 2009, GoSS has initiated education reconstruction which is limited in funds and finance but very ambitious. The GoSS strategy is based on its awareness of the role of education in peace-building and economic growth. The avenues through which GoSS functions are: recruiting teachers, teacher training, textbooks, school and classroom construction, strengthening equity and school retention (Gichuhi, 2015).

Another example is Afghanistan where Human Rights Watch provide evidence how teachers and students have been attacked, and murdered and schools closed. 100,000 Afghan children who used to go to school in 2003 and 2004 but they did not attend school any more (Wedge, 2008). 200 newly-built schools were destroyed. There have been two reasons for why schools were attacked and destroyed. Firstly, attacks appeared due to tribal or private disputes

surrounding the schools. Secondly, schools were targeted because they were educating girls and women. However, despite these attacks and destruction, there has been optimism which has been reflected in the government and population resilience to face these attacks by supporting children to go to school and providing safer places, escorts and guards. The number of enrolment for both girls and boys increased to over 7 million in 2007 (Wedge, 2008).

In Kosovo which is passing through a difficult post-conflict transition, education intervention have been set against the backdrop of a complex inter-ethnic divide. This has led to the creation of long-term camps for displaced people where the need for emergency education has been required and where the process of transition is still challenging (Field notes, 2010). UNICEF presents the required support and advocates the right of every child to education in a period of deep social division. UNICEF also supports inclusive education for the children of the minorities. It has also cooperated with the Ministry of Education to reform the national primary curriculum in a way to meet the needs of the cultural and linguistic needs of the ethnic minorities (Field notes, 2010).

In 2006, peace returned to Uganda. The government started the process of re-building infrastructure and basic services such as hospitals, schools, water, sanitation and hygiene facilities. Restoring education was a priority (Munaita, 2012). This was done with the help of ZOA Uganda which is a Dutch NGO that started in South East Asia by helping Vietnamese refugees in the Vietnamese war in 1973. ZOA has been in some districts in Uganda helping people to strengthen the delivery and quality of primary education. ZOA has also constructed community schools and seeks to increase the government capacity of primary education by establishing community schools in remote areas of Northern Uganda (Munaita, 2012). ZOA has endeavoured to integrate community schools into the public school system, because community schools do not receive any financial support or teachers from the government and they lack access to approved public examinations. There are still children in north Uganda whose parents have endured more than a decade in encampment. The struggle is to keep up with the rest of Uganda children (Munaita, 2012).

The purpose of reviewing these lessons is twofold. Firstly, to understand the Iraqi context more by comparing it with other contexts. Post-conflict countries have a lot of things in common and they experience the same loss of security, infrastructure, and education. The second purpose is learning from these lessons of other post-conflict countries how to act and

respond to the challenging post-conflict time. The countries that have been reviewed have not given up and they have made use of the simplest ways to restore education and allow children to learn. The best lesson to be learned is never to give up and that you do not need to establish luxurious schools to restart educating children. The countries that have been reviewed have used camps as school physical appearance. For example, in Zambia, and after the refugee influx in 1999, educational committees were organised in all camps to prepare sites for emergency schooling. The learning process took the form of simple lessons followed by recreational activities. Qualified teachers from the refugees organised a programme for the refugee children using photocopies from the DRC curriculum from Tanzania. The resources for secondary education were available so one of the teachers organised private tuition for the secondary refugee students (Sinclair, 2000).

## 2.6. School Building Delivery Process

For the achievement of a good value for money, the school building delivery process includes, as figure 1.1 shows, three sections. In section 1 there are the main issues that should be addressed in delivering school building strategy, section 2 is about setting how the programme will be prepared. Section 3 is related to the effective implementation of the programme including monitoring and evaluating.

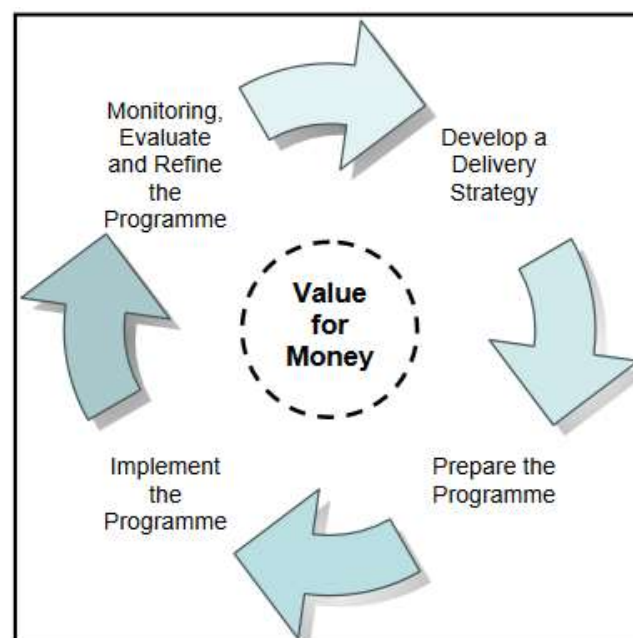


Figure 2.1.: The steps included in the school building delivery process. Adopted from Bonner et al., (2011, p. 3)

In section 1, the main issues related to the school building delivery process should be addressed. The main obstacles that may hinder the process of delivery should be discussed

through a dialogue between all the parties to reach a mutual vision and understanding about relevant issues (Bonner et al., 2011). There are three points whose implementation support in a more effective school building delivery process. First, there should be a political will by the government to support new approaches and creative ways of working. Second, development partners should provide long term support to the government. Third, professional expertise should be available to work with the government and the development partners in the stages of designing and implementing the programme.

There are a number of issues that should be addressed in the strategy developing stage (Bonner et al., 2011):

- The programmes scope, rationale, and objectives should be based on national policies.
- It should be made clear how the programme will be linked to other educational initiatives and support them.
- There should be a scope of coordination with other sectors such as health, water, sanitation and transport
- Gender issues should be taken into account
- Procurement should take place according to the government systems. Its use should be justified in terms of money value, alignment with the government systems and decentralisation.
- In order to achieve decentralisation, the role of schools, community committees, district administration and associations should be increased. Schools managed by the community have a number of advantages such as more local labour and materials and more cost-effective where the saved money can be for other local programmes. When community contracting is used, the procurement, management and accounting should meet the government systems and standards, but they do not alienate the school users. Community contracting requires transparent approach based on the cooperation of all the parties who will be trained in order to be aware of their roles and responsibilities. When there is a parent and community involvement, in the design and construction of the school, the focus will be on using local building materials and the skills of community artisans (UNICEF, 2006). Higgins *et al.*, (2005) summarises the necessity to involve community and stakeholders in school design project as follows: 1) Different users have different perspectives which differ from that of the architect; all perspectives should be included to obtain a more detailed and complete design project, 2) Genuine community involvement leads to individuals' empowerment and

satisfaction in addition to improving the design project; 3) Teachers' points of view are vital in how make use of the space, 4) Environmental perspectives are not at the forefront of the teachers' planning, 5) Staff and stakeholders' morale is crucial in a learning environment.

- It is expected that government and financial management will not welcome the use of these approaches; which is one of the obstacles related to this stage.
- The programme should include ways and methods to assess risks with mitigation measures, monitor progress and assess impact and how it will be measured.
- Quality control should be included with the proposed budgets for providing personnel qualified for carrying out quality control.
- Realistic targets should be set in terms of the completing the project within the money available. Therefore, a time line should be provided which states the stages of accomplishing the project and the obstacles that may hinder the achievement of the project at a particular time.
- Financial management should be also available with an assessment of the financial risks and the mitigating recommendations.
- The responsibilities and roles required at each stage should be defined within the used procurement system. Existing capacity should be assessed at every level.
- In the item of school planning and design, the existing norms of school designs are reviewed to assess their suitability.
- The programme should indicate how the new design will be developed or the existing one will be modified. The programme should also state what standard designs should be developed, and how the principles of good design will be incorporated in the programme. Land-related issues should also be included.
- Most money allocated for schools is spent on maintenance. Therefore, any project of an educational establishment should aim that the building will last at least 25 years. The annual budget for routine maintenance costs 1.5-2% of capital cost which means 45-60% of the cost capital over the whole life of the building.
- The strategy needs to address disabled students' issues. The strategy should also provide an engagement with disabled organisation in order to be aware of what arrangements to be taken in the programme design and application. Disability-related issues should also be raised especially in the areas of engineering and architecture which are not familiar with these issues. The programme should also ensure that the

facilities of water and sanitation take into consideration the requirements of disabled people.

- Environmental assessments should be undertaken which include the materials used in construction, the location of the facilities, risks of natural hazards, climate, water and sanitation and health and safety.

The second stage of the building delivery process after developing a delivery strategy is preparing the programme. In this stage, efforts continue to be made to raise awareness of the programme, and the work in a coordinate fashion continues. The infrastructure management should be strengthened within the Ministry of Education. Putting necessary structures in place at the district, community and school level is essential. There is also a need to develop financial management and procurement, and to prepare an implantation programme that takes into account factors such as rainy weather. At this stage, the development of capacity building materials takes place (Bonner et al., 2011).

The third stage of the building deliver process after preparing the programme is implementing, monitoring, evaluating and refining the programme. There are a number of items related to this stage (Bonner et al., 2011):

- Technical assistance should be provided which guarantees the value for money and the introduction of new ideas as well as the management of construction programmes.
- Erratic disbursement of funds is one of the major problems that faces governments and community partnership and results in the faltering and failure to complete the work on budget and time. When money is erratically disbursed, the whole project becomes untrustworthy and unreliable and the door to corruption becomes widely open. Regulating the disbursement of fund minimises the risks of the programme is a must.
- Capacity building and quality assurance are not temporary issues that are done at one stage; rather they are on-going practices that support community, district and the delivery of a good-quality infrastructure. Government and development partners should consider this approach and integrate it in the programme. These activities need to be viewed as an investment to support the implementation of the programme and maximise the effect of available resources and value for money. Perceiving these



issues as extras threatens the quality of the project and the success in completing it properly.

- Monitoring, evaluation and reporting are also on-going activities which start at the beginning of the project. These activities provide management information to the programme team, assurance to both government and development partners. Reported information can be fed back and used for creating more facilities, and ascertaining more needs for the future. This should take place in an open and transparent way by a multi-disciplinary team. Reporting must be accessible and it can take the form of reviews
- Long-term support is advantageous for the project and it should be long term that covers 5 to 10 years. During this period of time, effective approaches can be developed and refined as well as capacity can be built up. Long term support can be established through working through sector-wide approaches, mutual funding arrangements and coordination between development partners.
- Monitoring and re-evaluating risks should always be conducted. In the implementation of any construction programmes there is always a chance for risk. If some risks are identified in the phase of programme design, they should be monitored on a continuous base, reassessed and managed over the period of the project. Risk monitoring and re- evaluating activities must include plans for facing and mitigating the risks.
- The last item in the implementing, monitoring, evaluating and refining the programme is continual refinement of the programme. The project should be refined in accordance to the feedback received from the activity of monitoring and evaluation. The programme materials should be updated and reviewed.

In the following figure (Figure 2.2.), there is a detailed description of the stages of school building delivery in the UK:

Stage One: Initiation (Identify the need for a building project)



Stage Two: Preparation: (Set up a project team – appoint a design advisor and education expert, Appoint a design champion, Ensure the building project supports the school's ethos and vision, Set up a project steering group; carry out initial design work



Stage Three: Bid/Approvals

Prepare Outline Business Case with robust design work and costs; reflect schools' genuine collaboration to date



Stage Four: Development

Project leader, design advisor and education expert develop the brief, Select shortlist of high quality design and construction teams



Stage Five: Selection

Programme the ITN (Invitation to negotiate), period carefully to maximise design time and opportunities for discussion, Select preferred bidder



Stage Six: Refinement

Finalise and agree detailed design



Stage Seven: Appointment

Sign the contract In PFI confirm Preferred Bidder at Financial Close Agree programme of works on site. Sign the contract



Stage Eight: Construction

Figure 2.2.: The stages of school building delivery process in the UK. Adopted from Nicholson (2004).

## 2.7. A framework for school building in Iraq

The first issue to be discussed when dealing with building schools in post-conflict Iraq is that Iraq has been overwhelmed and devastated by the consequences of the enforcement of sanctions and the internal and external conflicts. Therefore, the need to a democratic schools, as Knapp (2007) puts it, is urgent. Iraqi individuals need to learn tolerating others and to self-actualise as well as there is a need for stimulating free and open society. Schools that are people-oriented and in which the community can participate are typical schools for the Iraqi situation. The society that should be created in Iraq must be represented in school (Kelly, 2015) where everyone is respected no matter if they are disabled, mentally impaired or they belong to a particular ethnic minority. When the school tolerates the differences of the individual it encourage the creation of a bigger society that does the same (Rammelkamp, 2015).

Iraqi government should also consider the relationship between the school building architecture and the students' performance and behaviour. This will lead to profit and value for money because money is invested in the right place (Knapp, 2007). The different styles of learning by the students should be taken into account. The needs of the disabled children should be met in the architecture of the school building. Children's need to play and exercise should also be reflected in the building of the school. All the other facilities such as toilets, safe and clean water, clean air, lightening, heating and individual spaces should be included. In other words, building a school is about meeting the human needs and facilitating comfortable and easy as well as healthy environment to the children (Dudek, 2014).

The most important factor in the success of a school building is the involvement of the community in the school building programme (Arthur & Wright, 2013). This will lead the use of local labour as well as local materials. The importance of the community involvement is that the local residents become an integral part of the school where they care about it and consider it their responsibility. This involvement strengthens the students' ties with the school, and they deem it as their second home. Parents will feel that they are part of the teaching/learning process; the matter which stimulate the students to learn and behave well. Community should be involved in the school building at early stages because they can

suggest issues related to the students and to the needs of the community for not only a school but an adult learning centre (Ellis, Morgan& Ken, 2013).

The process of building delivery and developing the programme as well as implementing the project will not succeed if there are no evaluating and monitoring. Reporting gaps should be an on-going process that takes place in a constructive and transparent manner is essential for the completion of the project. Funds should be disbursed in a transparent way and, more importantly, monitored way. Building school is about making value for money, so funding should be a priority, but capacity building and quality assurance should be on-going practices that support community and delivery of a good-quality infrastructure. Decentralisation is a good policy that makes the process of building a school a mutual task that everyone contributes in. The programmes scope, rationale, and objectives should be based on national policies. Decentralisation can be enhanced by increasing the role of community and development partners. Although procurement, management and accounting should meet the government systems and standards, but the involvement of the school users, children and adults, is important. Procurement should take place according to the government systems and policies. The use of procurement should be based on the value for money, compatibility with the government systems and decentralisation. The cultural context of Iraq will also play a role in the building and architecture of schools. The cultural preferences of colours, the drawings and the manifestation of the historical value of Iraq can all be used in decorating the school and relating the children with their history. It is also a way of looking at the past in a different way and restoring hope and determination inside the children. The new generation should restore their confidence in their country and the past as well as the present. The school building in Iraq can be designed in a way to accommodate celebrating the cultural and social events of the Iraqi people and those of the ethnic minorities. It is a way to learn how to tolerate other people who are different.

In fact, what is more required is in the framework mentioned above is the community participation and the use of human rights- based approach. Education quality in a country is linked with the way social systems are structured and the values that underpin these systems as well as the extent to which political mechanism allows citizen to influence the social system structure. In some countries, failures in social systems are attributed to individuals; in this case the government provides services which deal with social problems as the result of individual failures (Russell, 2009). This approach is called deficit model which does not question the mechanisms that prevent citizens from achieving leading lives. Contrary to the

deficit model is the human rights- based approach which treats social problems as the result of socio-economic exclusion. The focus in this approach, unlike the deficit model approach, is on the structure mechanisms that prevent citizens from achieving leading lives. The human rights-based approach analyses any situation based on the country's obligation towards its citizen to provide justice and empowerment, to provide community with the moral basis to achieve attainment (Ibid.).

UNICEF (2004) asserts that people are active participants in the process of building their development rather than passive recipients of commodities and services. This is about building local ownership and reducing marginalisation and centralisation. Hence, the community participation is essential because school brings diverse people together to form a school-community. Diverse people, different age, different gender and different race as well as different religion or sectors are replicated in and by school. This may lead to community conflict and the marginalisation of one group or another (Russell, 2009). The human rights-based approach allows a school to focus on the shared humanity of a group and decreases the violation of human rights in a school. In this case, the chances of inclusion are increased despite the differences in race, religion and sector. The human right-based approach supports the citizen understand that they are connected through humanity and helps them to claim attainment. It is worth mentioning here that when the government control increases, the community participation decreases. Colonial rules in most of the developing countries not only excluded the parents and community participation in schools but also excluded the majority of these populations from accessing education (Russell, 2009).

For education in Iraq to successful, a transfer of authority should take place from the central body to the local community. Community participation is essential in establishing schools in Iraq. This will support the conflicting groups to gather together for one or more common purposes which is about building a democratic society where everyone shares the responsibility. The human rights-based approach is also constructive in post-conflict Iraq to build individuals who have humanity in common and who are willing to restart building a society that tolerates differences in race, religion, and sector. Moreover, building a school based on the participation of community i.e. students, parents and other stakeholders will lead to the creation of satisfied users; the matter which results in more catering for the school and environment.

However, however, the current situation in terms of Iraq school building delivery differs. There is no community or parents' involvement in the school building delivery process. The government and the Ministry of Education supervise, plan, organise, and implement the school building delivery process without involving any other side. Schools design does not take into consideration the special needs and other measurements. The labels of the stages of school building delivery process differ, but it is agreed that this process starts with a planning stage, organising stage, and implementing stage (Bonner et al., (2011); English, 2011). In the empirical study, there are four stages that will be investigated to understand the school building delivery process. These are planning, organising, implementing and the fourth stage is legislative. In fact, the legislative stage covers the other stages because the other stage cannot be completed without applying the legislations peculiar to every stage.

As this study aims to explore the school building delivery process and identify the factors that contribute to what this process is, there is a need to review the political, economic, social and cultural state of Iraq which is the concern of the next part.

## 2.8. The cultural, economic and political circumstances of post-conflict Iraq

It is essential to examine and discuss the cultural, economic, and political situation of post-conflict Iraq in order to understand the factors that play a significant role in the process of reconstructing the country and its public services in general and the school building delivery process in particular. In this part, the cultural, economic and political circumstances will be identified and the extent to which each affects the process of school rebuilding will be surveyed.

As a post-conflict country, Iraq has displayed some characteristics which it shares with other post-conflict countries.

Nkengbeza (2014) has identified the characteristics of post-conflict environment as:

- ❖ Unpredictability of life which means that people do not venture into business because they are not certain about the future and the near future and they cannot predict what will happen in the market. This makes investment at its lowest level. Markets become disruptive; which leads to the monopolising of trade as prices rise because of the limited supply of goods especially foods, and thus, competition experiences a breakdown

- ❖ Increasing criminality which means that the rate of crime rises because of the absence of the police. Corruption also increases because things go unchecked.
- ❖ Hunger and starvation prevail; which indicates that conflicts lead to the drain of food supply, and because of uncertainty it becomes very difficult to import food from the neighbouring countries
- ❖ Infrastructure, environmental and record, is destroyed which points to the fact that records are destroyed at a large-scale and infrastructure has been destroyed and the environment has witnessed a huge degradation
- ❖ Government breakdown which means that government activities are not visible anymore and finance is directed to military activities. Moreover, the number of people who work for the government has decreased either because they were killed or they fled, or because there is no chance to elect other skilled and professional people. The lack of fund can also be a cause
- ❖ Psychological issues which mean that there are some psychological properties which characterise people in the post-conflict setting. Of these properties are that everyone is traumatised due to the fact that everyone was either raped, injured, tortured or lost some close friend or a relative. The other properties are that everyone is expecting something. A group is expecting to benefit from the shift of power; other group is waiting to see the war perpetrators punished.

Conflict affects education in two channels. First, reducing the stock of human capital and skills due to injury, death or immigration. Second, education human formations can also be affected negatively through the reduction of educational expenditure and the destruction of education infrastructure (Maier, 2010).

This is reflected on education in Iraq in that people are more concerned with food and food security than education. People do not feel safe enough to send their children to schools. As far as school building delivery is concerned, the most affecting element is that the increase of corruption because everything goes unchecked and the government breakdown encourages criminality, corruption and favouritism. The current study will survey the impact of these factors on school building delivery process.

### **2.8.1. The culture dominant in Iraq**

In Iraq, people's sense of belonging is affected by the beliefs and values they have. There are a number of issues which stand as major markers of identity such as religion, tribe, family,

political party and gender (Steele, 2008). The most significant roles are played by the faith tradition and tribe costumes which are the most significant shapers of Iraqi people's identities. There are a set of values which distinguish the Middle East culture from the Western cultures. These values are related to hierarchy, group welfare, respect for authority, as well as saving face as opposed to innovation, respect for law, equality and individualism (Steele, 2008). A number of studies have concluded that avoidance of shame and pursuit of honour are the primary drives of behaviour in Iraq. The ultimate goal of an individual in such a society as this is that their community acknowledges their honour. Taking away an individual's honour stigmatises not only him/her but the whole group to which they belong. In such societies driven by honour, a lot of tension is created not because the individual has broken the laws but because he/she has violated the decided order of relationships imposed by society (Steele, 2008).

One way of interpreting the factors that affect communication among members of society is the dimension of individualism/collectivism. In fact, this dimension of has been used to interpret many behaviour aspects such as sharing the benefits and resources, accepting the views of others, and concern of loss of face (McMullan, 2015). Culture is thought to impact interpersonal communication situations. In collectivist societies such as Iraq, people are attached to 'in groups' that care and protect them in exchange of devotion and loyalty to these groups, while in the individualist societies like UK and Austria, the person is only responsible to look after themselves and members of direct family. Collectivists are usually embarrassed by disagreement and any difference in opinions is explained as hostility. Individualists, on the other hand, justify and defend their opinions and use direct justification (McMullan, 2015).

According to Kaur & Noman (2015), collectivist and individualist cultures also differ in terms of other dimensions. The first dimension which reflects the opposition between collectivism and individualism is power distance. This dimension explains the distribution of power among members of society and how far they accept this distribution. For example, in the collectivist culture classroom the teacher is the source of power where he/she decides the teaching process and the style of teaching, and the students relay on him/her to receive knowledge. Debating with the teacher is not appreciated and so is questioning him/her. Students are allowed to clarify not debate. This characteristic can be applied to all services in



the collectivist society (Kaur & Noman, 2015). The second dimension is individualism-collectivism which is concerned with the power of a group or society over an individual. In individualist societies and cultures, people are more autonomous and they focus more on their own personal goals and interests. However, in collectivist cultures group interests dominate individual choices and goals. In collectivist culture, people learn and work to benefit the community and earn living, while in individualist cultures people learn for personal benefit and self-satisfaction and self-esteem. The third dimension is masculinity and femininity which reflects the division of cultures as feminine and masculine. In the individualist culture, masculine traits are displayed such as assertiveness, competition and material success, while in the collectivist cultures feminine traits prevail such as concern for the weak and interpersonal relationships. The fourth dimension is uncertainty avoidance which reflects the individual's perception of and ability to handle unexpected and uncertain situations. In collectivist cultures, people prefer structured and known structures and avoid controversial structures. The sixth dimension is long-term orientation and short-term orientation. Long-term orientation refers to virtues directed toward future rewards, while short-term orientation traditions are directed toward avoiding embarrassing and satisfying the needs of society. The above discussion can be summarised in Table 2.1 which demonstrates the differences between individualism and collectivism in terms of the assumptions about the individual's relationship with the group, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity and femininity (Ulaywi & Khairi, 2013).

Table 2.1: the opposing characteristics of collectivist and individualist cultures

Dimension	Collectivist culture	Individualist culture
Individual's relationship with the group	Since birth, a person is attached to 'in groups' for which he/she looks after and expects loyalty in return	Every person looks after himself/herself and members of the direct family
Power distance	Accepts inequality among society's members High power distance is accepted	Accepts inequality in society in a less extent than the collectivist culture members Low power distance is required

Uncertainty avoidance	High uncertainty avoidance: contemplative, less aggressive, relaxed and relatively tolerant	Low uncertainty avoidance: active, aggressive, emotional, security-seeking and intolerant
Masculinity and femininity	Feminine traits are expected to be displayed such as interpersonal relationships and concern for the weak	Masculine traits are expected such as assertiveness and material success

Culture has also believed to affect the political attitudes of individuals as well as their behaviour. Each one of the collectivist and individualist culture produces different traits, political attitudes and feelings (Yoon, 2010). (See Table 3)

Table 2.2., the political attitudes and behaviour that each culture displays

Individualism	Independence, feeling of responsibility, imagination, determination and perseverance
Collectivism	Tolerance and respect for other people, religious faith, unselfishness and obedience

As far as employment is concerned, individualist culture individuals work to satisfy their own passion and achieve their own goals. In this case, employees are selected through interviews and personality testing. In the collectivist culture individuals work to meet the group's goals and to satisfy their bosses and those who are superior in the hierarchal administrative patterns. In this case societies are built and established by related individuals who prioritise group's values and behave according to group's norms in communal forms (Annekinda & Rahmani (2015).

According to Jamil *et al.* (2016), culture also affects the way employees and managers behave and explains the problem of administrative corruption. The most common forms of administration corruption are favouritism and abuse of authority. There are also high power distance and inequalities. Regulations and laws are very complex. There is also an obligation which is originated from the collectivist culture. In highly individualistic cultures, the work

place is contractual and work is organised and based on individuals, self-interest and economic rationality. In collectivist cultures, on the other hand, management is morally or immorally based and the groups management. Personal relationships dominate all other tasks. It is also important to create links between private life and work. The hierarchal structure is also salient and it penetrates bureaucracy and the country political system (Jamil *et al.*, 2016). Societies with high uncertainty avoidance tend to avoid any change or reform that leads to transforming their secure and well-known environments where all the aspects of corruption have been rooted and anchored. These societies are marked with hierarchal administrative patterns. These hierarchal administrative patterns are blended with centralised power to create the means for reducing uncertainty. Every part of any firm of company is burdened with a lot of rules and procedures which lead to unnecessary delay of delivering services and decision-taking. Most of these rules are repetitive and selected in a way to favour relatives and friends. Iraq is a high power distance country which accepts differences in power in the country. In the high power distance countries there is a huge emotional distance between the superior and subordinate. The subordinate always tend to obey the superior and carry out the orders issued by them; they never contradict the orders or the will of authorities. The subordinate have to always accept the superior's point of view because they can never discuss their own views in front of them. Hierarchal levels are more required at work than innovation and creation.

Armed conflict reinforces inequalities and destroys social capital as well as damages social infrastructure. Additionally, some people and, as a result of the prolonged armed conflict, have formed the belief that violence is an effective means to resolve interpersonal problems and earn a living. This becomes a serious problem in the post-conflict era when people have become used to violence, emotional, physical and psychological, and they fail to communicate and use dialogue as a way for communicating their ideas and perspectives. In other words, knowledge of traditional means to resolve conflicts and disputes is replaced by violence and killing. The culture of dialogue has eroded and people enforce their opinion through guns (IDDRS, 2006).

The current study will explore the extent to which the culture that dominates the Iraqi society affects the school building delivery process. According to the discussion above, the cultural components penetrate shape the stakeholders and ministries as well as departments' relationship with each other. The hierarchal patterns that govern these relationships, the acceptance of the unequal distribution of power, and the dominance of the superior-

subordinate relationship are important factors that impact projects decision-making in the country.

### **2.8.2. The economic situation in post-conflict Iraq**

The most threatening factors to economic growth and stability in a country are corruption and particularism (Davies, 2004). Prolonged armed conflicts have devastating repercussions reflected in poverty and low return to education. One of the traumas of being exposed to violence is poverty. Conflict leads to severe economic losses and lack of access to essential goods and services. Children are withdrawn from schools either to replace a dead father or to support the household of the family which the father's job does not suffice. Conflicts also affect the children's return to education. As a result of conflict, infrastructure, markets and job opportunities are all destroyed and finding jobs becomes difficult, so children do not find the point of going to school and gaining skills and knowledge since the hopes to find jobs after finishing education are slim (Justino, 2015).

Iraq is a country that has emerged from a prolonged armed conflict and which is facing major challenges to transform its war-weakened economy and polarised social and political systems into health economy which is able to meet the needs of its citizens (Practical Action, 2005).

According to the World Bank (2005), poverty and conflict are interrelated and they shape each other. Conflict undermines both social and economic development; conflict can even be called as development in reverse. The rebuilding of educational systems is vital in reproducing positive attitudes and values which contribute to the rebuilding of the post-conflict Iraq. The CAF has identified four characteristics of a society that is resilient to conflict:

- The social and political institutions are inclusive, accountable and equitable
- The presence of ethnic, social and political diversity and the tolerance of this diversity rather than dominance and polarisation
- The aim of development and growth is to achieve equitable benefits for the whole of society's classes
- Adoption of the culture of dialogue rather than violence or particularism (The World Bank, 2005).

According to Buckland (2005), education does not cause conflict; it encourages peace building and settlement. He also identifies some problems which are typical of post-conflict countries:

- Inability to fund any type of expenditure or to have access to domestic revenue sufficient to operate domestic systems
- Poor record keeping and lack of transparency in the education governance
- International financial aid and support subside before the flow of reconstruction resources is mobilised

One of the most prominent features in post-conflict countries is that the shortage of human resources and the reduction of social expenditure. This can be explained through two reasons. Firstly, the fall in the social expenditure is reduced to the eroding to the government's tax capability. Secondly, the fall in social expenditure is the result of the fact that the government's revenue holds up, but there is a switch from social expenditure to military expenditure (Brown *et al.*, 2008).

The economic repercussion of the prolonged armed conflict can be observed at the macro levels and the micro levels. At the macro levels, economic repercussion is reflected in the economic and social infrastructure such as transport, communication, health, and education which are all or partially destroyed as a result of fighting or lack of maintenance. At the micro level, the destruction is manifested in the human capital, environment and land. Thousands of Iraqi professionals such as doctors, engineers and researchers fled the country to find a refuge in other countries because they were targeted in the armed conflict (Practical Action, 2005).

Funding is fundamental in the process of peace building and supporting the local governance. Resources are essential for the local government to carry out its responsibilities and mandates. The consequence of the inability of the local government to take its responsibilities is that people lose confidence in the peace building process and the legitimacy of the structures of the new state. Increased corruption is also one of the negative consequences of the lack of funding. With the absence of strong Central State which has clear institutionalised accountability frameworks, the chance for decentralisation to grow and lead to local elite appropriation conflict about the resources allocation. In this case decentralisation pushes

corruption through the structure of the State to the lower units and feeds divisions that may lead to conflict. During reconstruction efforts, corruption can be of particular concern since these efforts involve a good deal of financial resources (UNDP, 2010).

Armed conflicts play a major role in destroying local and national economy: productive capabilities are reduced and so are livelihoods. Corruption is also increased. The ability of the government to run projects and reconstruct the country deteriorates and school reconstruction is not an exception. There is also another negative impact of the economic deterioration in the post-conflict era which is that those who used to make living by the gun they have to enter the labour market and compete with ordinary citizens who are more qualified than them. The scarce of jobs in the labour market and the unfair competition with others who are more qualified than them make the reintegration of these people even a harder task (IDDRS, 2006). Slomšek *et al.* (2012) point out that electricity infrastructure in Iraq is severely damaged due to both lack of investment and lack of equipment. Although the supply of electricity is increasing, it is still unable to meet the rising demand. Additionally, more than 40% of households do not have access to the public waste network; a septic tank is used instead to dispose waste. 20% of households do not use safe drinking water. The situation is worse in the rural areas where only 43% of households have access to good-quality drinking water, while water used for agriculture is scarce and of poor quality. This drives people to move to the urban areas; the matter which increases urbanisation.

The current study will examine the degree to which the economic situation of Iraq overshadows school building delivery process. The economic situation is represented by the limited funds, the mismanagement of finance, the absence of the Central Government which monitors revenue and finance distribution, and inappropriate resource allocation.

### **2.8.3. The political climate of post-conflict Iraq**

The most challenging issue that faces a government in the post-conflict era is the absence of constitutionally- established authority of the governance. The other issue is the weakness in the government performance and resources. According to the World Bank (2006), almost all post-conflict countries have demonstrated weak performance in the effectiveness of the government and control of corruption. Government effectiveness points to the quality of public services, and civil service as well as the government independence from political pressure. Government effectiveness is also measured by the extent to which law is enforced

in the country away from any other affecting factors. It is also measured by how far people feel secure with the police and the courts and how far rules and laws are enforced. This effectiveness, moreover, is measured by the extent to which the government can implement policies and regulations that contribute to the development of private sector. The other indicator of the government's effectiveness is how far the citizens are enabled to express themselves freely and have free associations and free media. The control of corruption is another indicator of the government's effectiveness. By corruption it is meant exercising public power for personal gains through 'petty and grand forms of corruption or state capture by elite and private interests' (DESA, 2007, p.14). In the conflict emergent countries, the state is dominant as the fundamental actor in all sectors. The political institutions are too weak to afford for the development of a participatory and reformist political system (Practical Action, 2005). Any effort by the government to restore the social and political well-being is hampered by the challenges that a post-conflict environment produces such as competition for power for personal interests and not for using it for the public interests. The other issues that a post-conflict environment produces are that political leaders have limited legitimacy, an extremely high level of polarisation, and lack of consensus on the way the country should follow to encounter the challenges and overcome them (Practical Action, 2005).

## 2.9. A strategy for school building delivery process

The discussion of the cultural, economic and political circumstances of post-conflict Iraq enables in establishing an insight about the challenges that post-conflict Iraq has had in reconstructing its healthy political, educational and economic systems. However, the success stories of other countries which were war-torn is helpful in giving hope and belief that there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

The focus of this thesis is on school building delivery process and the factors that contribute to the development of this process. In fact, it is so important to understand that building school is not merely building the physical structure of the school. Schools stand for education and the educational reform in post-conflict Iraq. Hawrylenko (2010) claims that education is not only about teaching and learning, and he presents a definition of education and its function in the post-conflict societies. According to Hawrylenko (2010), education is the key in preventing conflict and also in the reconstruction and reconciliation process as well. Education, moreover, is important in building social cohesion and supporting economic

recovery. Education has been used as a tool to foster peace. This is done by ensuring that the factors that have led to the conflict will not be repeated, and that questioning of injustice and cooperation will be nurtured. Education and schools help to mitigate the negative consequences of conflict in children and to make people feel optimistic and that life has started to be natural. Education contributes to reducing poverty through three channels: decreasing poverty by decreasing illiteracy and empowering people through providing them with skills for life and employment, developing human resources through training courses, and promoting reconciliation through arming people with life skills and positive attitudes. For all these reasons, the priority of the government should be education and how to endeavour to empower the educational sector.

Before discussing any approach that should be applied for economic and social growth, it is crucial to focus on the enforcement of law before starting any step. Vapnek et al. (2016) presents an explanation about why it is important to consider enforcing law as a priority in the post-conflict Iraq. The rule of law and development are interrelated and they reinforce each other. The rule of law is also crucial for sustained development, the realisation of human rights and freedom, eradication of poverty and economic growth. It also protects the poor against any violation of their rights. Moreover, the legitimacy of government depends on the administration of laws. During the conflict, people become used to violence and to take the law into their own hands. In the post-conflict era, the citizens should feel and notice the presence of the legitimate government through courts and enforcing decisions for all the citizens regardless of their gender, religion, ethnic group or geographical location; in other words there should be a justice system that functions properly which enables citizens to feel secure and safe. The definition of law and its function should also change. During the conflict and in the pre-conflict era in Iraq, law was used as a tool to exercise power. It was also used for the benefits of those in the elite while the majority of people were deprived of justice and using law to restore their rights. So, it is vital that people regain their confidence in the justice system and they should learn to take disputes to courts.

This study will establish a strategy for school building delivery process that aids in making this process smooth and achievable and beneficial for the Iraqi society. This strategy is a long-term strategy and its implementation will take years because it involves radical changes in terms of legislations, economy, politics and culture issues. These issues are all interdependent and they all interact to make the school building delivery process a success. The strategic plan that the current study recommended and which is based on a plan from



Central America and Kosovo . This strategic plan can be related to some plans and lessons from countries which witnessed conflict and wars and then succeeded in re-establishing an appropriate educational system. For example, according to the World Bank (2005), the key lessons learned from Central America are:

Developing a clear national vision on education reform

Pay attention to the dialogue and consensus-building process

Move swiftly to secure the support of critical stakeholders

Empower parents and involve them in their children's education

Decentralise the education ministry to avoid bureaucratic derailing of the reform process

Kosovo in the post-conflict time also worked on Education Management Information System, decentralisation and legislation supported by the World Bank (World Bank, 2005). According to World Bank (2005), Kosovo consolidated the educational system in a way that did not destroy the community participation in schooling and education. In Kosovo, communities also played role to call the students back to school through back-to-school movements. In Kosovo,

UNMIK (United Nations Mission in Kosovo) worked with international partners and local specialists to identify the critical potential sources of conflict in the previous system such as exclusion, biased curricula and textbooks, and method of instruction). UNMIK issued Interim Arrangements for the Resumption of Schooling to address these issues in the new system of education.

Stakeholder management

A stakeholder can be defined as a key entity or individual with an interest in the outcome of a particular policy (Sewart, 2009). The term 'stakeholder engagement' stands for more active initiatives done by the government to bring together groups of stakeholders as a response to a specific consultation policy need (Stewart, 2009). From the stakeholders' perspective, these initiatives give those affected by the policy a more focus on their relationship with the government and also the start of entrée into the government. From the government perspective, stakeholder engagement means listening to the stakeholders and taking notice of them (Stewart, 2009). According to Mok & Shen (2017), stakeholder management is a

structured process where strategic methods are used to build and involve robust relationships with the project internal and external stakeholders (). The concept of stakeholder engagement was realised in 1960s and became an essential element of development in 1990s. Mok & Shen (2017) have proposed three perspectives to conceptualise stakeholder management. Firstly, a strategic management tool which is used to resolve conflicts and increase stakeholders' commitment and sense of ownership in the project. It is also used to apprehend knowledge from stakeholders. Secondly, stakeholder engagement can be conceptualised as an ethical need which increases social equity by encouraging all the parties to express their views in the decision- making process. Thirdly, a social learning platform where the stakeholders can understand each other's needs and points of view and establish a shared language and communication, and set shared goals for the development phase.

Dialogue is an essential key word in stakeholder engagement in the sense that it has been defined as the process where the company or the government established a constructive dialogue with the stakeholders and which affects the company or the project activities (Tanimoto, 2016). It is also the process where the internal and external stakeholders are engaged in decision-making and establishing the strategic goals of the project. What is most important is that this engagement of stakeholders by the government or by the company is based on the stakeholders' proposal to change the company policy and management behaviour (Tanimoto, 2016). Reymond & Bassan (2014) identify four participation levels when implementing stakeholder engagement. First, the level of information where the stakeholders receive information about the project. It is a one- way flow of communication. This stage is an awareness-raising and informative meeting. Second, consultation which is a two-way flow of communication and where needs, opinions and interests are discussed and where the stakeholders are asked about their feedback about the scenarios and situations of the project. However, the stakeholders are still not involved in decision-making. Third, collaboration where the company or government works as a partner with the stakeholders on issues such as development and solutions. The stakeholder share decision-making. Fourth, empowerment or delegation where the capacity of the stakeholders is built which enables them to make informed decisions and to take their responsibility for the final decision-making.

In this thesis, the stakeholders of the project of school building delivery were interviewed. One of the issues to be discussed in the interviews was the relationship between management and the stakeholders and how the lack of communication made the project a challenge. Interviews also showed that not engaging stakeholders in decision- making made things more difficult in the project and that not knowing their roles and what they had to do diminished the sense of ownership of the project in the stakeholders.

## 2.10. Summary of the Chapter

This Chapter of the Literature Review has discussed the theoretical framework upon which the present study is based. The situation in Iraq as a post-conflict country has been identified and the need to establishing schools that support restoring security and peace building has been outlined. The experience of the Western countries in designing schools in a way that takes into account developing the cognitive skills of children, developing autonomous learning, and children with special needs. Schools should also be designed in a way to cater for the children's mental and physical health. However, schools in Iraq are still far from being design in such a way due to the political, economic, social and cultural circumstances that control school building delivery process. These circumstances have been identified and their impact on the Iraqi landscape is also discussed.

The experiences of other post-conflict countries have also been reviewed and these countries determination and effort to normalise life in the post-conflict time have also been discussed. These experience are useful for the Iraqi context to teach Iraqi people not to give up and fight to create the environment for their children to learn with the simplest tools.

## Chapter 3

### Research Methodology

#### 3.1. Introduction

The previous chapter has presented review of the studies that discussed different areas of school building requirements in the post-conflict countries. The previous chapter has also reviewed how conflicts and wars impact the process of school building because of its economic, social and educational consequences on society. It has also discussed the unique context of post-conflict Iraq and how this affects the process of school building. In this chapter, the research methodology will be discussed which refers to how the theoretical issues of this study will be surveyed and explored and how data will be collected and analysed. This requires a first stage where the research problem, aim, objectives, and questions will be determined. Accordingly, the structure of this chapter will be as follows:

- Establishing the research problem aim, objectives and questions
- Identifying research philosophy, approach, strategy, methodological choices (research design), data collection and analysis techniques
- The procedures of data collection and analysis
- A summary of the chapter

#### 3.2. Establishing the research problem aim, objectives and questions

Setting the research problem is an essential step to conduct research (Saunders *et al.*, 2009) because setting research problem gives focus to the research, sets boundaries and directs the research (O' Leary, 2004).

Corbin and Strauss (2008) have identified some sources where the research problem can be established:

- Discussion with supervisors: Discussion with supervisors can help in recognising the research problem as supervisors can support in establishing the problem since they are more experienced.
- The literature: by reading different studies about one topic, one can recognise the research problems through identifying the gaps and challenges and the unexplored areas in the previous studies.
- The researcher's professional and personal experience: This experience helps the researcher to identify the boundaries of a problem within the domain of their work and motivates them to seek solutions to that problem through research.
- The research itself: A researcher may start research without defined research problem, but data collection and analysis can open the researcher's eyes to some research problem.

The research problem of this study is derived from the researcher's personal and professional experience and the literature where the research problem is still unexplored area.

### 3.3. Initial incitation

According to Furseth, & Everett (2013), the first step in conducting research is to find a topic that can be developed into a research topic. What make a topic a research topic are that finding the topic of interest, focusing on problems or conflicts that evoke the researcher's curiosity, and that the topic is related to the researcher's interests and personal experience or work place and profession, and discussed in the literature.

The research topic in the current study was initiated from the researcher's personal and professional experience, workplace, and the attempt to find a solution to the problem of reconstructing schools in the post-conflict Iraq and the difficulties that accompany reconstructing schools. There is an urgent need to re-establish schools in post-conflict Iraq because of the role that schools play in establishing peace and settlement in the post-conflict era.

### 3.4. Literature review

It has been believed that literature review is one of the most important parts upon which the research is established. Its significance is like that of a building foundation. It stands for a sound base upon which research is founded (Oliver, 2012). A literature review provides

previous knowledge about the topic under investigation, and it also forms an anchor where the new ideas about the topic can be attached (Oliver, 2012).

According to Oliver (2012), a literature review significance is derived from that it can introduce influential studies. To be influential, studies should: develop research by introducing new concepts about the research field, introduce new concepts that lead to a new insight of the topic under study, develop new avenues for approaching the research topic; and introduce concepts that can lead to adopting new methodological approaches.

The literature review in the current study has covered issues that are related to the topic and the problem of the study: the features of school building as stated by the UNICEF and World Health Organisation, the conflict catastrophic consequences on the infrastructure of Iraq especially education, the extent to which school reconstruction in the post-conflict Iraq has been affected and the consequences of this on the Iraqi society, the influence of the Iraqi society's political, economic, social, cultural, and structural characteristics on school building projects. Based on this, the literature review sources in this study are books, journals, statements and reports from the UNICEF and United Nations.

### 3.5. Concurrent data collection and analysis

Some research studies establish research questions before data collection and analysis. However, in some other cases, research additional questions can be created and clarified after data have been collected and analysed (Green & Thorogood, 2004). In this study, some questions have appeared after data collection and analysis regarding the effect of the cultural uniqueness of Iraqi society on school building process. Accordingly, the following literature review has been resulted (Table, 3.1) from the initial stages of the research and the stage of data collection and analysis

Table 3.1. The stages of writing the literature review in the present study

#### Literature Review

STAGES	FINDINGS
Identifying the relevant concepts and the relationship between them	Conflicts, post-conflict setting and post-conflict school construction
Identifying the initial research gap	Post- conflict school constructions face a number of challenges
Identifying initial research problem	Problems related to constructing schools in post-conflict setting

Identifying research initial focus	The needs to construct schools for the post-conflict society and how to address these needs
Identifying important research area	School constructing is challenged by characteristics of the post-conflict setting and the nature of society
Specifying research focus and geographical context of the study	The challenges that school constructing faces in post-conflict Iraq and the influence of the unique characteristics of Iraqi society on the process of school building

### 3.6. Research problem

The problem of school rebuilding in post-conflict countries has received attention from studies that have attempted to explore the factors that affect the development of school building in post-conflict countries. The factors that play a significant role in the development of school building at the international level are: poor economic situation and low rate of economic growth (Langer & Brown, 2016), lack of peace and safety (Zaum & Cheng, 2011), the absence of government (Ahmed *et al.*, 2002; UN, 2007), bureaucracy (American Anthropological Association, 2007), and absence of community (Ochieng, 2007). There is a need to find out the factors that contribute to the failure or success of school building projects and the gaps that are needed to be filled. This requires exploring the unique context of Iraq and finding how this uniqueness affects the development and achievement of school building in post-conflict Iraq. The research will investigate the impact of the above factors which have been concluded to impact school building in different countries. However, this research study will also examine how the unique nature of Iraqi society affects school building delivery process and makes it what it is. The literature about the topic of school building delivery process in the post-conflict countries has shown that many post-conflict countries were able to re-build educate children in a very simple context which lacked the requirements of a standard school which means that in terms of school building delivery process, post-conflict countries have priorities to do, and they should put education first.

### 3.7. Research aim

The research aims to establish a strategy that supports in making school building delivery process an achievable process with reduced challenges. To do this, the research should explore the current school building delivery in Iraq. The research examines how school

building delivery process can be achieved and developed in post-conflict Iraq in the light of political, economic, social, cultural, and administrative challenges.

In order to achieve the above aim, the following objectives are established for this research study.

### 3.8. The study Objectives

- 1- Evaluate the current status of school building delivery in post-conflict Iraq
- 2- Explore the school building delivery process
- 3- Critically review the good practice and lessons learnt from international contexts that have improved the delivery of schools
- 4- Examine the interaction between the stakeholders and the Ministry of Education in terms of school building process
- 5- Produce a strategy for improved delivery of school buildings in Iraq

### 3.9. The research questions

- 1- What is the current status of school building delivery in Iraq?
- 2- What is the school building delivery process?
- 3- What are the lessons learned from international contexts that have improved the delivery of schools?
- 4- What is the status of the interaction between the stakeholders and the Ministry of Education in terms of school building process?
- 5- What is the best strategy for improving delivery of school building in Iraq and that meets the needs and the requirements of the current era?

### 3.10. Research methodological design

After establishing the research aim, objectives and questions, research methodology should be designed in a way that addresses these issues i.e. achieves the research aim and objectives and answers the research questions. Research design is the process that transforms an idea or a question from the state of being a thought into a meaningful and purposeful investigation. Research design refers to the process itself rather than the end product (Gatrell *et al.*, 2011). Research design is a framework that is used by the researcher to address research issues and questions. It is about the entities that will be used and accessed by the researcher to test



hypotheses or establish a theory (Ang, 2014). Saunders *et al.* (2009) present a model that explains all the stages and issues addressed in research designed. They present the Research Onion which represents all the issues underlying data collection and analysis (Figure 2.1.). The present study has adopted the research onion and addressed all the issues in the order they appeared in the figure.

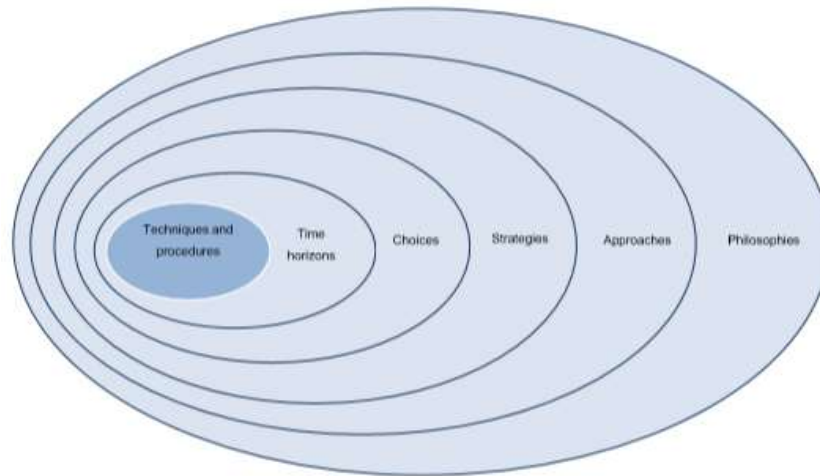


Figure 2.1.: Research Onion adopted from Saunders *et al.* (2009)

### 3.10.1. Research philosophy

Research philosophy refers to knowledge and how this knowledge develops. Understanding research philosophy can help in clarifying research design and what type of data to be collected and what techniques of data analysis to be used (Fox *et al.*, 2014). Saunders *et al.* (2009) point out that research philosophy is concerned with assumptions about how the world and reality are viewed and how these assumptions shape the research strategy and the methods that are used for data collection and analysis. According to Creswell (2007), the philosophical assumptions include a stance toward the nature of reality (ontology), how the researcher knows what he/she knows (epistemology) and the role of values in the research (axiology). Ontology refers to the nature of reality and its features. When a researcher conducts a qualitative research he/she assumes that there are multiple realities. Epistemology refers to the relationship between the researcher and what is being searched. For instance, when a researcher conducts a qualitative research he/she selects to be close to the participants and carry out the study in a setting where the participants live and work. Axiology points to the values that the researcher brings to the research. This issue is more prominent in the qualitative research than in the quantitative research. For example, in a qualitative research the researcher admits the presence of the researcher through the interpretation of the studies and perspectives of the participants (Creswell, 2007).

Table 3.2., reseach philosophy assumptions and their characteristics. Adopted from Creswell (2007, p. 17).

Assumption	Question	characteristics	Implications for Practice (Examples)
Ontological	What is the nature of reality?	Reality is subjective and multiple, as seen by participants in the study	Researcher uses quotes and themes in words of participants and provides evidence of different perspectives
Epistemological	What is the relationship between the researcher and that being researched?	Researcher attempts to lessen distance between himself or herself and that being researched	Researcher collaborates, spends time in field with participants, and becomes an “insider”
Axiological	What is the role of values?	Researcher acknowledges that research is value-laden and that biases are present	Researcher openly discusses values that shape the narrative and includes his or her own interpretation in conjunction with the interpretations of participants

There are two key research philosophies. There are other philosophies Positivism and Interpretivism are the main research philosophies that are used as a philosophical framework of the majority of research studies conducted (Tajvidi & Karami, 2016).

#### A- Positivism and Interpretivism

Positivism is based on the ontological assumption that there is one singular objective reality. This reality can be measured via scientific objective quantitative methods. Positivism assumes that only what can be garnered through objective and independent observation can count as real (Ayoub, 2014). Knowledge exists in facts that have been conceptualised as statements of truth. Positivist researchers seek to find generalizable principles (Kezar *et al.*, 2011). The epistemological assumption of Positivism is that knowledge can be only obtained through objective observation where the researcher adheres to specific research procedures and keeps himself/herself distant from the research (Malson, 2003). Reality exists regardless the individuals; in terms of research

this means that the participants and researchers' experience and feeling and knowledge have nothing to do with reality and the principles that underlie it. Reality is independent of the researcher and participants' knowledge and feelings (Taylor, 2008). The context is independent of observations so what is true in one time and place is also true in every place and at any time. There is also the assumption of linear causality which refers to that there are no causes without effects and no effects without causes (O'Connor & Netting, 2011). Positivism is value free and the research projects are focused extrinsically (Leonard, 2005). According to O'Connor & Netting (2011), the gaps that Positivism has demonstrated make it possible for Interpretivism to emerge as an alternative to Positivism. Some of these gaps are: Positivism has led to an inadequate conceptualisation of science, Positivism cannot deal with induction theory, Positivism ignores the humanness of people and participants which has its negative consequences on the ethical and validity issues, and the assumptions that underlie Positivism are difficult to be maintained such as the separation of the researcher from the research and there is only one singular objective reality.

Lindgreen (2012) points out some characteristics of an Interpretivist research: Interpretivism is based on the ontological assumption that there is no direct access to the real world, and there is no single reality; rather there are multi realities. The Interpretivist epistemological assumptions are that the world can be understood through perceived knowledge, and the research is focused on the concrete and specific and seeks to understand a specific unique context. The researcher's role is essential in an Interpretivist research as he/she experiences what they are studying and creates the meaning of a phenomenon, and he/she uses pre-understanding. Interpretivism rejects the idea that the subject and object are separated, and it claims that reality cannot be directly measured. It also claims that the context plays a sensitive role in the social reality that depends and is interpreted by the subject (Walther, 2014).

The present study is an interpretivist research. This position has been determined by the research aim, objectives and questions. This study aims to find out how school building delivery process is achieved and developed in post-conflict Iraq in the light of political, economic, social, and cultural challenges. Its objectives are to explore the school building delivery process, critically review the good practice and lessons learnt from international contexts that have improved the delivery of schools, examine the interaction between the stakeholders and the Ministry of Education in terms of school building process, and produce

a strategy for improved delivery of school buildings in Iraq. Therefore, Interpretivist position is compatible with the nature of this study from a number of different perspectives. First, the context plays an essential role in the knowledge construction. Second, the role of the researcher is important in the sense that his experiencing, knowledge and skills are essential in creating meaning from the collated data. Third, the participants' experience and knowledge play a vital role in the research and interpreting the findings. Fourth, quantifying is not necessary as what is required is understanding the unique context of the post-conflict Iraqi setting as far as school building is concerned. Fifth, the research seeks to understand the problem of the research from the participants' points of view and construct knowledge from their viewpoints and perspectives.

### 3.10.2. Research Approaches

According to Bryman & Bell (2011), a research approach can be defined as the relationship between theory and research. Research approach can be identified as the steps and procedures taken by the researcher to transform research aims and objectives as well as other theoretical assumptions into research methods in terms of data collection and analysis methods (Creswell, 2014). Two research approaches can be distinguished: inductive and deductive. Table 3.3. demonstrates the specific characteristics of every approach and the type of research where it is used:

Table 3.3. The differences between inductive and deductive research approaches. Adopted from Gratton, & Jones (2010) and Collins (2010).

<b>Inductive research approach</b>	<b>Deductive research approach</b>
Interpretivist	Positivist
Qualitative	Quantitative
Attempts to answer questions such as “how” and “why”	Attempts to answer questions such as “what”, “when” and “how many”
Follows a flexible design	Follows a pre-established design
Explains causality	Establishes causality
Develops theory	Confirms theory
Takes longer and takes more resources as theories have to be derived from the data	Does not take as long or as many resources because theories are there to be tested
Understands the meaning people give to different contexts	More scientific

A flexible approach	A structured approach
Understands the context	Move from theory to data
The researcher is part of the research	The researcher is separate from the research

With the Inductive approach, the researcher does not have a pre-established theory; rather the researcher forms theory after data analysis. In the deductive approach, the researcher has a pre-established theory and he/she collects and analyses the data to confirm that theory. Collins (2010) outlines the characteristics of both approaches. In induction, it is essential for the researcher to understand the problem and its nature and make sense of the data, and then form theory based on the collated data and their analysis. The strength of inductive research approach is not its focus on cause-and –effect relationship, but on the context where the research is carried out. In deduction, on the other hand, the search is for explaining casual relationships among variables. In deduction, there should be a distance between the researcher and what is observed; in other words, the researcher should be objective. There is also a need to operationalise the research so the facts can be measured. Deductive research also includes generalisation as one of its stages. The sample size should be sufficient to generalise the results (Collins, 2010).

The present study aims to investigate the factors that play a role in building schools in post-conflict Iraq and how these factors shape the process of school building delivery process in all its stages and the recommendations to make this process smoother and avoid the challenges. The inductive research approach is compatible with and appropriate to the current research because of the following issues:

- The context is very important because the study examines the circumstances of post-conflict Iraq and the impact of these on the school building process
- How the participants understand the nature of the problem is very important and their perspectives are basic in the study
- The researcher does not seek to confirm a theory; rather he seeks to form theory from the data analysis about the factors that affect the stages of the process of school building delivery process in post-conflict Iraq
- The researcher is part of the research and his experience and knowledge contribute to understanding the nature of the problem and the findings of the data

- The research attempts to answer the questions of “how” and “why” the process of school building is achieved and why it is what it is. This information will be derived from the participants’ perspectives and interview’s data.

For all the issues that have been mentioned above, the current study will adopt the inductive approach.

### 3.11. Methodological Choices

Creswell (2014) identifies research design as different types of inquiry which provide specific direction for the researcher to choose procedures for research design. These types of inquiry can be qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods.

#### 3.11.1. Qualitative research design

Table 3.4. Provides a description of the characteristics of qualitative research design:

Table 3.4.: The characteristics of qualitative research design: Adopted from Merriam & Tisdell (2015).

Research aim	Qualitative research is interested in understanding the meaning which people in the study construct , how people understand their experiences, and what meaning they add to these experiences
The role of the researcher	The researcher in a qualitative research stands for the primary instrument who is able to collect and analyse the data as well as do the interpretation
Research design	In Qualitative research design is emergent and flexible in order to respond to the changing circumstances of the research
Sample selection	In qualitative research sample selection is non-random and purposeful. The sample size is small compared with that of the quantitative research sample size
The researcher position	In qualitative research the researcher spends a good amount of time in the natural setting of the study observing and in contact with the participants
Philosophy	Knowledge in qualitative research is constructed by people while they are making sense of an experience. Knowledge pre-exists and in need to be discovered

### 3.11.2. Quantitative research design

Table 3.5. demonstrates the characteristics of quantitative research

Table 3.5: the characteristics of quantitative research. Adopted from Mertler (2015):

Research aim	Collect and analyse numerical data to describe and explain phenomena of interest
The role of the researcher	The researcher should remain objective and try to generalise facts behind a particular context
Research design	Research design is structured and nothing should be left to chance
Sample selection	Random selection of participants to aid in generalisation, and Large numbers of participants
The researcher position	In quantitative research, the researcher does not need to be present in the setting of the study and his/her feelings and experience are separated from the research and data collection and analysis
Philosophy	-The world where we live is relatively stable and uniform so it is possible to understand it, measure it and make generalisations about it. -The world exists as a single reality that is composed of facts which can be observed and measured

The current study research design is qualitative because it seeks to understand the meaning the participants construct of the experience of the school building delivery process in post-conflict Iraq and how the participants understand this experience. The researcher in this study is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis as well as in interpreting the data and making conclusions. The context is essential as this study examines the context of post-conflict Iraq and the characteristics of this context as far as school building delivery process is concerned. There are multi realities and every context has its own uniqueness and every context has a different reality. The study sample is small and the sample selection is purposeful in the sense that the sample has been selected because their experience and skills as well as knowledge are relevant to the study and the topic under investigation. The researcher does not seek facts, but he seeks to discover the meaning which the participants add to the experience of school building delivery process in post-conflict Iraq. The researcher

explains the findings of the collated data analysis partially from his experience and stance and partially based on the participants attitudes, explanation and description of the school building delivery process. It is difficult to make generalisation to another context because every context is unique.

### 3.12. Research Strategy

Research strategy is defined as a plan to address a problem. This plan has a structure, solutions in terms of research objectives and a description of devices essential to implement the strategy. The research strategy is identified as a part of a larger scheme of development of research approach (Singh & Bajpai, 2008). In other words, research strategy is a generalised plan for realising the research objectives. While the research problem determines the research methodology, research strategy is determined by the research objectives (Singh & Bajpai, 2008). One of research strategies is case study according to which the current study is designed.

A case study is defined as a type of research that concentrates on one case looking at it in detail and does not seek to generalise from it (Daum, 2013). Another definition has been provided by (Coombs & Holladay, 2011) of case study and which complements the former definition: a case study is a type of research which investigates a contemporary problem or phenomenon in its real-life setting and context. It is the research strategy where the researcher selects a case or a problem to study in depth. The research employs this type of research to examine specific situations, analyse the background and the social contexts and evaluate the results (Coombs & Holladay, 2011). There are three types of case studies: descriptive case studies, explanatory case studies, and exploratory case studies (Yin, 2013). Descriptive case studies provide a comprehensive account of the phenomenon under study without exploring this phenomenon in terms of existing theories. Explanatory case studies go beyond describing the phenomenon under study and provide an explanation of why the events occur and use explanatory concepts to form an insight of the phenomenon in its real life context. Explanatory case studies attempt to find the cause-and e-effect relationships that enable an in-depth understanding of the study problem. Exploratory case studies seek to discover characteristics of the phenomenon under investigation and stimulate the researcher to ask more questions and establish hypotheses about the phenomenon. Exploratory case study aims at more understanding of the research object (Schaltegger *et al.*, 2006).



The aim of explanatory case study is to find the casual relationships in the data analysis to uncover these relationships in order to generate conclusions about the study phenomenon. It also involves the development of the research questions and requires hypotheses to reject or to confirm. Exploratory case studies do not seek to explain but they explore data for associations and interactions. They do not seek hypotheses to reject or confirm. Descriptive case studies follow the same approach as the exploratory case studies but used descriptive theory instead of the exploratory theory (Williams & Golden, 2014). The research strategy of the present study is an exploratory case study. The study phenomenon is school building delivery process in post-conflict Iraq. The study aims to explore the phenomenon in more in-depth and form an insight about the factors that contribute to this process. There are no hypotheses of theoretical formulations to be confirmed or rejected. It is about how to explore this phenomenon and understand it more.

Case studies can also be classified as single case study (holistic), single case study (embedded), multi-case study (holistic) and multi case study (embedded) (Yin, 2009). In terms of a single design, the research focus is on one case. The case study can be critical, unique, representative, revelatory and a longitudinal study (Yin, 2009). The critical case study is used for extending a new theory while the unique case study is used to investigate a new case. Undertaking a representative case study means studying a case that is common and then obtaining understanding of other cases. A revelatory case study allows the researcher to conduct a study about a phenomenon that has not been surveyed before. The case study design can also be holistic or embedded. In the holistic-designed study the analysis unit can be single or multiple. Embedded-designed case study, on the other hand, can have a unit of analysis which is either many or one with a number of sub-units (Yin, 2014). This design allows the research to investigate the research phenomenon from different angles and to find evidence through different units. The current research study is a multiple-case study.

Case study methodology was used to obtain an in-depth understanding of the school building delivery process in post-conflict Iraq. Case study methodology enables the researcher to study the research problem from different perspectives and in a real-life context.

Yin (2013) divided case studies into two types: holistic and embedded. The holistic case study has only one unit of analysis while the embedded case study has a sub-unit or a number of sub-units. For example, an organisation can be studied as a holistic case study if the research question is concerned with exploring the cultural change that results from applying

technology in this organisation. However, if the organisation is studied as an embedded case study, it means that different types of change will be surveyed as a result for implementing technology: change in management style, change in work practices and change in organisational structures (Blaikie, 2009).

The current study adopted the embedded case study to examine the school delivery process in post-conflict Iraq. There was a need to study different levels of this process and collect data regarding every stage of the process. The data were collected from 12 participants who worked in different positions and perform different tasks. The study surveyed the school delivery process in post-conflict Iraq through a number of venues: planning, Organising, implementing and legislations. These are sub-units of analysis where the whole case study is the school delivery process.

#### 3.12.1. The justification for adopting a multiple-case study in the current research

Using a multiple-case study allows the researcher to examine the phenomenon under investigation in more than one case and then compare the findings of the different cases in order to obtain an increased understanding of the study problem. According to Yin (2014), the multiple-case study enables the research to investigate different contexts. Miles and Huberman (1994) point out that a multiple-case study enhances strengthening the precision, stability and validity of the findings. This is because the evidence obtained from a multiple-case study is deemed compelling (Yin, 1994). There are two cases in the present study. Schools in Iraq are built through two organisation: Governorate and the Ministry of Education. Participants have come from these two organisations.

The study aims to establish a strategy for school building delivery process that enables the stakeholders face the challenges they have in post-conflict Iraq. This strategy is based on the difficulties and the gaps that can be found in school building delivery process and which make school building delivery process a hard journey that may end in failure. There is, therefore, a need to understand the situation of school building delivery process from all angles starting from the planning stage to the implementing stage. This requires interviewing different people from different contexts, and with different experience in order to obtain the complete picture about school building delivery process. Stakeholders from the two

organisations of school building have been interviewed and they were considered as two cases. The first case includes the participants from the Governor rate and the other case includes the participants from the Ministry of Education. The findings of the two cases will be compared which will increase the understanding of the challenges and obstacles facing the school building delivery process.

Yin (2014) points out that the findings of a multiple-case study can be presented, analysed and discussed as one set. This is possible when the researcher's focus is more on the phenomenon than the case. Likewise, the focus of this research is understanding the school building delivery process in post-conflict Iraq and the factors that impact it but not as the phenomenon was understood in each case separately.

### 3.13. Data collection methods

The data collection method that is used in the present study is interviewing. There were 12 participants interviewed in Iraq. The selection of the sample was not random. It was purposeful selection of sample. This is because the study aims to survey the meaning which the participants added to the experience of school-building process in post-conflict Iraq. The participants were the stakeholders of the school building delivery process in post-conflict Iraq. They were interviewed at different places but mostly in their offices. The interviews were conducted in Arabic and then translated into English. The questions of the interview were created from three sources: The research objectives and questions, the literature review and the researcher's experience.

Semi-structured interview method was used in this study. The features of this data collection method are that (Merriam, 2009):

- Questions are a mix of those of less and more structured interviews
- Questions are used flexibly
- Specific data are required from all the participants
- The largest part of the interview is guided by questions that are in need to be explored

In the semi-structured interviews, while the researcher tries to ask the participants a specific set of questions, he/she allows some freedom to them to express what they think about the phenomenon under investigation. Interviewees usually have information or knowledge which has not been thought of in advance by the researcher (Hesse-Biber, 2016). When the interviewees start to disclose this information, the researcher in the semi-structured

interviews develops the conversation to elicit more data about the study subject. It has been believed that in a qualitative research an interview is a type of conversation between co-participants. During this conversation, information flows back and forth in the course of the interview. While the researcher prepares a set of questions for the participants, his/her main concern is listening intently and obtaining cues from the participants. The very heart of the qualitative research interview requires reflexivity which refers to the essential situational dynamics that are created between the interviewer and the interviewees and which influence the construction of knowledge (Hesse-Biber, 2016).

In the semi-structured interviews the researcher needs to carefully think how to select participants and why, what to ask and how to analyse data (Carla, 2013). The semi-structured interviews provide the opportunity for the researcher to elicit data relevant to his/her topic. Although the style in semi-structured interviews has been described as non-directive, the research questions guide and drive the procedures of the interview. The task of the researcher or the interviewer is to find balance between maintaining the process of the interview in a controlled way that guarantees answering research questions and giving the interviewees some freedom to talk and express their perspectives about the topic under study and bringing new insights about that topic. Preparing a good interview agenda can be helpful. The interviewer should establish a rapport with the interviewees. This can be done by asking more public questions and then moving to more personal questions. Using a stimulus to encourage the interviewees to talk is also a good idea. This stimulus can be a film, a newspaper or a piece of news (Carla, 2013).

In the present study, participants were selected purposefully and were contacted to arrange a time to be interviewed. The interviewer explained the goals and the aim of the research and focused on the problem of school building delivery process as a shared concern these days. The interviewees were interviewed in their offices and the interviewer's identity and position helped a lot in ice breaking and establishing the rapport necessary for continuing the interviews. The interview started as a general discussion of the situation in Iraq and the urge to establish schools that protect youngsters from the dangers of the street and provide healthy shelters for them. The difficulties of achieving the processes of school building were discussed and then answering the questions started. They spoke in Arabic as the levels of spoken English were different and ranged between beginners to intermediate. Data were recorded and transcribed and then translated.

### 3.13.1. Justification for adopting semi-structured interviews as a data collection method

As this study is a qualitative inductive multiple case study, semi-structured interviews are compatible with the research design which searches for data to socially construct knowledge from the participants' perspectives and points of view on the study problem. Questionnaires in this case are not helpful because they yield general explanation of the study problem without providing an in-depth thorough in-detailed description. For this reason, semi-structures interviews were selected to provide data that allowed the researcher understand the study problem in-depth from experienced and people who had knowledge of the problem. Semi-structured interviews enable the researcher to ask follow-up questions and interrogate about something that is not understood. They also allow the researcher to ask more questions to clarify one point or another. Through the semi-structured interviews both the interviewer and the interviewees deeper understanding of the information exchanged.

The interview questions were grouped into four categories: Planning Stage, Organisation Stage, Implementing Stage and Legislative Stage. Legislative Stage was allocated a separate category because it is so essential. Legislations are a key term in any project so it is important for the stakeholders and policy makers and ministries to consider these legislations and reflect this in the project (Dudek, 2012; Winkel et al., 2007). However, it is worth mentioning that in all the stages of school building delivery process discussed in this thesis, legislation. Legislations decide what should be done in every stage and the in-depth goal of this is everyone's safety and well-being starting from the builders to the end-users of the school (Dudek, 2012). Legislations guide how schools should be built to be safe in the case of floods (Earthman, 2013). Legislations are also essential in planning and constructing such as the legislations on working conditions ranging from indoor smoking bans to the ergonomic qualities of the office furniture. Legislations are also there for administrative rules that affect the designer in carrying out business including those rules that rules regarding contracting and competition and which influence the choice of designers and contractors (Brooker & Weinthal, 2013).

### 3.14. Data analysis

The present study adopted the thematic analysis method for data analysis. Thematic analysis has relatively recently been used as a qualitative research method for data analysis. Thematic analysis is not tied to any theoretical approach to qualitative research. This explains why the

researcher who chooses thematic analysis needs to decide the themes that are present for analysis. The study's epistemological stance and research questions can play a vital role in deciding the themes to be analysed (Carla, 2013). A 'theme' stands for a specific pattern of meaning which is found in data. A theme captures important points about the data as far as research question is concerned (Carla, 2013). Thematic analysis takes place according to stages. Riger, & Sigurvinsdottir (2016) identify these stages as follows. First, the researcher transcribes data and reads data repeatedly to become familiar with them and begin to think about possible codes. At this stage it is useful for the researcher to make notes of coding categories. Second, generating initial codes. After reading the data many times, the researcher can identify an initial list of codes. Codes are useful for organising the data in meaningful units. But codes are not yet themes. The researcher can highlight repetition. It is essential to code for many potential themes. Third, searching for themes. After data have been coded and the material that falls under the same codes has been brought together, then searching for themes can start. Themes can be organised in a hierarchal way starting from themes to sub-themes. Using visual representations may be useful such as drawing or tables. At this stage themes may exist as well as codes that cannot fit in any theme. Fourth, reviewing themes. A potential set of themes can be identified at this stage. Some potential themes may not be relevant to the research question. There should be clear boundaries between the themes. There are two processes at this stage: to check whether the code extracts that constitute a particular theme fit together, and to assess as a whole whether themes capture the entire set of data. Re-reading the entire data is essential. Fifth, defining and naming themes. The researcher identifies the central idea of each theme and provides a name which captures this idea. Sixth, producing the report. After identifying the themes and their interrelationships, a report may be produced. The report reader should see how the data extracts illustrate the themes. The report should be more than describing the data. It should raise critical questions that need to be addressed.

In the current study, data were transcribed and translated, then read many times for coding. The frame of coding was developed based on the research objectives and questions. Relevant data were selected under the code framework. Then, it was examined how the selected data under each code contributed to add meaning and information through the function of the language that constituted these data such as words, or structures. For example, under the code framework of the challenges of Planning stage, all the relevant data were selected for this

code. These selected data developed the meaning in the challenges of the Planning stage and contributed to its being clear and understood. Another example is that data that spoke about the relationship within the Ministry of Education department and that of the governors with the Ministry of Education can be selected within the code framework which is determined by the research question: What is the status of the interaction between the stakeholders and the Ministry of Education in terms of school building process? Every research question, thus, and every research objectives can be used as the base of a code framework under which collated data are classified according to their relevance to the questions and the meaning the language used expresses.

### 3.15. Piloting

A pilot study can be defined as a mini-replica of the research study, and its purpose is to test all the aspect in the research study before starting the full research (Taylor, 2006). There is a difference between the pilot study and the main study, as far as the purpose of each is concerned. The purpose of the pilot study is to identify the strengths and the challenges in the research plan in order to improve the main research and fill the gaps that the pilot study shows. The purpose of the main study is developing knowledge (Taylor, 2006). As mentioned above in this section, the pilot study is designed to assess many aspects in the main study such as the research design, research methodology, sampling technique, effectiveness of the procedures, and participant recruitment (Taylor, 2006). In other words, the purpose of the pilot study is to increase the validity and reliability of the main research, increases the dependability of questions and the usability of instruments (Dover et al., 2014).

The goal of piloting semi-structured interviews is the same as any pilot study i.e. to test the usability of the instrument/s used for data collection and the validity and reliability of the research as a whole. Thus, piloting semi-structured interviews includes repeating two or three interviews and taking notes for prompts (Moiden, 2003). These interviews help in discovering approximate length of time, in determining area that could have emotional impact on the participants and finding out how to overcome any technical problems in terms of recording (Moiden, 2003). Piloting the interviews also allows the researcher to review the language and the questions used in the interviews. After piloting the data collection method, the researcher, the researcher also pilots data analysis. This is done by examining whether the results obtained in the piloting study are similar to what the study attempts to achieve.

Piloting data analysis in a qualitative research includes piloting coding that data (Moiden, 2003).

In the current study, piloting the semi-structured interviews has been carried out with three participants with different roles. The piloting has contributed a lot to refining the interview protocol and the questions to be asked (Tryfonos, 2014). The management of time was also reviewed as a result of piloting and longer time was given in the main study. Earlier piloting interviews took longer time in order both the interviewer and the interviewees got used to asking and answering questions. However, later interviews were much smoother because by that time the interviewer got used to interviewing and asking follow-up questions. This made the interviewer give a balanced time for each interview and follow the same pattern in asking and commenting on the interviewees' answers. As far as data analysis was concerned, the researcher piloted the data elicited from the piloting semi-structured interviews and found that coding the data within code framework was based on the research questions.

### 3.16. Sampling

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), the size of sample in qualitative research is less important than in quantitative research. The researcher in a qualitative research does not seek generalising the results (Jolley, 2013). Rather, the researcher of the qualitative research examines a phenomenon in a context where the findings apply only to that context (Berliner & Calfee, 2013). Neuman (2000) identifies a number of types of sampling such as snowball sampling, quota sampling, deviant case sampling, sequential sampling, theoretical sampling and purposive sampling. Purposive sampling, according to Neuman (2000) allows the researcher to select samples from a specific fieldwork for special purposes. In other words, with purposive sampling the choice of samples is not random and the researcher is given the right to choose the samples that meet the requirements of his/her research and provide knowledge of the problem under investigation. The participants in this research study were selected according to purposive sampling in the sense that the criterion of their selection was that they had understanding and knowledge about the research phenomenon and problem and, thus, they could assist the researcher in understanding and explaining them. The participants were all stakeholders who were governors or working for the Ministry of Education in Iraq and they were all working in school building delivery in post-conflict Iraq.



**Group 1:** Interviewee 1 Governor, Interviewee 2, Councillor, Interviewee 3, Educational officer Interviewee 4, Architect, Interviewee 5, Procurement officer, Interviewee 6, Finance Officer

**Group 2:** Interviewee 7, Director General, Interviewee 8, Architect, Interviewee, 9, Engineer, Interviewee 10, planning officer, Interviewee 11, procurement officer, Interviewee 12, Finance Officer

### 3.17. Summary of the chapter

The chapter has discussed this study research methodology according to Saunders *et al.*, (2009) Onion model which organises the components of research methodology in the form of layers and each layer stands for one component or a stage in the research design. The definitions of research philosophy, research approaches research strategy, research methodological choices, and data collection and analysis methods have been presented. This is to pave the way to outline the research methodology of the present study and identify how this study will realise the research aims and objectives and answer research questions. The present study is an interpretivist research that seeks to understand the problem of school building in post-conflict Iraq from the perspectives of the participants and construct knowledge based on their experience and the meaning they construct. The study approaches the problem in an inductive way which means that the researcher has not started the research with a pre-established theory and he collects data to confirm it. Rather, the researcher wants to develop theory post to data collection and analysis. The research design is that of qualitative where the researcher' role is essential in the research and he is a primary instrument in data collection and analysis. In other words, the subjectivity of the researcher plays an important role in determining issues in the research. The strategy used in the present study is that of a multiple case study as this research seeks to concentrate on two cases and survey them in their real-life context. The two cases have been selected to enable the researcher to shed more light on the school building delivery process and the challenges that are facing it in post-conflict Iraq. The use of the multiple case study increases the study precision and reliability as well as validity. Additionally, it enables the researcher to explore the study problem at wider scale. Semi-structured interviews are the method of data collection and discourse analysis is the method of data analysis (Table 3. 6):

Table 3.6.: The characteristics of the present study

The present study aim	The research aims to create a strategy regarding school building delivery process in post-conflict Iraq in the light of economic, social, cultural, administrative and political challenges.
The present study objectives	Evaluate the current status of school building delivery in post-conflict Iraq Explore the school building delivery process Critically review the good practice and lessons learnt from international contexts that have improved the delivery of schools The interaction between the stakeholders and the Ministry of Education in terms of school building process Produce a strategy for improved delivery of school buildings in Iraq
Research questions	What is the current status of school building delivery in Iraq? What is the school building delivery process? What are the lessons learned from international contexts that have improved the delivery of schools? What is the status of the interaction between the stakeholders and the Ministry of Education in terms of school building process? What is the best strategy for improving delivery of school building in Iraq and that meets the needs and the requirements of the current era?
Research philosophy	Interpretivism
Research approach	Inductive
Research strategy	Multiple- Case study
Research design	Qualitative
Data collection method	Semi- structured Interviews
Data analysis method	Discourse Analysis

## Chapter 4

### Data Analysis

This chapter is about the interview data analysis and the themes that have been yielded from the qualitative analysis of the data. Thematic analysis has led to producing themes from the data which will be discussed and related to the aims and objectives of the study.

The aim of this research is to develop a school building delivery strategy in Iraq. It is the intention of the researcher that the above strategy will help the Ministry of Education to improve the school building delivery process.

In order to achieve the above aim, the following objectives are established for this research study.

- 1- Evaluate the current status of school building delivery in post-conflict Iraq
- 2- Explore the school building delivery process
- 3- Critically review the good practice and lessons learnt from international contexts that have improved the delivery of schools
- 4- The interaction between the stakeholders and the Ministry of Education in terms of school building process
- 5- Produce a strategy for improved delivery of school buildings in Iraq

The participants have got numbers. Each professional role for every number is as follows:

Table 4.1. The numbers and roles of the participants

Interviewee 1 Governor
Interviewee 2, Councillor
Interviewee 3 Educational officer
Interviewee 4, Architect
Interviewee 5, Procurement officer.
Interviewee 6, Finance Officer
Interviewee 7, Director General
Interviewee 8, Architect

Interviewee, 9 , Engineer
Interviewee 10, planning officer
Interviewee 11, procurement officer
Interviewee 12, Finance Officer

The main themes that have been produced by analysing the data are:

#### 4.1. Challenges of every stage of the school building process: This achieves the first research objectives:

*Explore the school building delivery process challenges in Iraq*

The goal of this section is to demonstrate the challenges that school building delivery process is facing in the post-conflict Iraq as a result of its prolonged armed conflict that has affected all life aspects. The challenges will be discussed in relation to each school building delivery stage. These themes demonstrate the challenges that school building delivery process faces in all its stages.

##### **A- Challenges of the Planning stage: (Table 1 in the Appendix)**

Planning stage is the very initiative stage where everything related to the school building delivery process is planned starting from the maps, budget, purchases, and services.

The challenges that characterise the Planning stage have generally resulted from the fact that Iraq is a post-conflict country where thousands of people have lost their jobs, houses and thousands of children are homeless or without education. These challenges are context-related. There is a conflict between what should be done when designing a school building according to international standards and what reality requires. One of the features of this reality is that too many children are without education because schools are crowded and there are two or more shifts for the school day to contain the overflow of students:

*Baghdad needs 3,000 new school buildings to be able to accommodate the overflow. Last year students could not find a place to sit because the class was so crowded, and the teacher put three students at desks which were meant for two. Students have to go to classes in three shifts -- morning, midday and late afternoon. Classes are noisy and crowded and no one understands what the teacher is saying. It is crowded everywhere in the classroom, in the toilets where we could not wash our hands, in the playground where we cannot play. There is a failure on behalf of the government reconstruction programme to rebuild new schools in*

*replacement of the schools that were destroyed. This made things worse (Interviewee 3, Educational officer)*

This is the real situation of schools and education in Iraq. Therefore, the main concern is less to meet the international standards of planning a school than meet the urgent needs of the country. Interviewee 1, Governor outlines how a school building planning should respond to the needs of educational process: *“that emphasises the empowerment of the students, the efforts of the teachers to raise the students’ achievement, and the pastoral and social, emotional and physical needs of the students. The school design should contain all the requirements of a human being who is physically fit or disabled. In other words, the challenge is to create a mini society that represents the outside society but the difference is that the needs of all types of human beings are taken into account”*. However, Interviewee 2, Councillor, argues that in today Iraq there is no room for unrealistic plans; they rather should deal with reality:

*Our need to plan school is urgent the population whose ages range between 6-11 is increasing. We need to be realistic at this stage. Iraq is a post-conflict country which is deteriorated by war and so are all the services. Our ultimate goal is to plan a school building that has the very basic requirements such as sanitation and drinking water. School planning in Iraq is different from planning in other countries. Our basic goal is a place that accommodates children and provide a safe place where they avoid the dangers of being in the streets or being taken to be members of gangs (Interviewee 2, Councillor).*

Policy makers and planning people, therefore, are torn between what is ideal in planning schools and what is realistic. The other realistic issue and which is related to Iraq being a post-conflict country is the financial issue. Iraq is experiencing hardship in terms of finance though it is an oil -producing country. Funds are so essential and critical and they form a challenge at this stage. Interviewee 3, Educational Officer presents an example about how the financial situation of the country massively affects school building planning:

*Last May, construction firms got paid by Iraqi Education Ministry and began tearing down hundreds of old school buildings across Iraq under contracts requiring the companies to build bigger schools. However, what happened was that the schools have not been built and the Ministry says that it does not have funds for new buildings (Interviewee 3, Educational Officer).*

Interviewee 4, Architect, emphasises the point that school building planning should be “affordable and achievable”. Too much ambition can be pointless and waste of time and money. The policy of prioritising should be used when planning schools in Iraq and the priority is to find a shelter for the children to protect them from the dangers of the streets. Planning luxurious schools is not a priority for Iraqi people at present:

*The challenges that face us when planning a school building is how to design a building that accommodates the huge number of students and at the same time be affordable and achievable. We need to know the funding and the real amount of money that will be spent on the project. Sometimes planning can be too ambitious for the budget and the ability of the ministry of education to afford. Setting realistic targets is so important and we need to prioritise in terms of the school users' needs. At the moment what is needed is a building that contain the students and protect them from being on the streets and the dangers that follow this. Luxurious schools are not our targets at the moment. They are too much for us* (Interviewee 4, Architect)

Another budget-related issue is also discussed by Interviewee 6, Finance Officer. The project officer finds it challenging to apply the principle of value for money in everything he does and that he should make compromises because this is what the funds allow them to do:

*Since my duties are to support in the preparation of the budget, implement financial policies, establish the cash controls, monitor cash and investment, create and maintain supplier accounts and process supplier invoices, prepare income statement, so I have some challenges related to the project funding and the budget allocated to the project. I need to make sure that the principle of value for money is applied in every action I do.* (Interviewee 6, Finance Officer)

For Interviewee 7, Director General, the main challenge in the Planning stage of school building is that the interference of tribal and religious leaders with the process of school building and requesting a change of land for personal benefits. This point is related to the nature and structure of the Iraqi society which is a hierarchal society and the devotion is to the leader rather than to the country interest:

*When a specific land site is chosen it can be a challenge in itself. Obstacles can be created even when the land has been allocated and agreed upon. Tribal and religious leaders can suddenly request a change of land. In some case this can be for personal gain. Another challenge is we not have a proper school mapping process.*

Like Interviewee 4, Architect, Interviewee 8, Architect, stresses the point that Iraqi policy makers and school building stakeholder are in a position where they need to take into account the realistic and urgent needs of planning a school rather than the luxurious and ideal ones:

*The challenges that we may face are related to the fact that we need to design the building within the given budget, land, student numbers and rooms and the facilities that are required and which the budget allows. We need to modify the design and the plan in accordance with the huge numbers of the students which the project school has to accommodate. Reality imposes a lot of things on us even if we know that this is difficult to design (Interviewee 8, Architect)*

Interviewee, 9, Engineer also sheds light on the financial issues and how they impact the whole process of school building in the sense that planning and designing of a school should be achieved within the limits of the funds and budget otherwise, the project will stop and be cancelled:

*The challenges are related to that there are many issues in planning a school building such as the land, the soil, the structure, the environment, the trees. These are the external issues. There are internal issues such as the walls, the height, the toilets and sanitary and other things. They all should be compatible with the standards and within the specified budget. Sometimes we need to find compromises in the what should be to cope with the funds and the requirements of the real situation (Interviewee, 9, Engineer).*

Interviewee 10, planning officer has also emphasised the impact of the financial situation that Iraq is undergoing on how school building projects are designed and planned:

*It is about planning everything starting from the planning application to budget setting and every other thing as far as planning is concerned. We need to plan everything at this stage.*

Likewise, stakeholders should also adopt the policy of prioritising and seeking to achieve the very essential and urgent things:

*The challenges come from that I have to set the financial policies and establish a strategy that meets both the project goals and the budget allocated for the project. I have to implement policies which are suitable for everything in the sense that everything should be achieved at reasonable cost. I also have to prioritise things and put them in order according to their importance sometimes we need to give things if they are not essential. This is how we cope with the difficult current situation in the country (Interviewee 12, Finance Officer).*

To sum up, what data have demonstrated about the challenges of the Planning stage is that these challenges spring from the situation that Iraq is experiencing which is related to its being a post-conflict country and what that means in terms of funds, number of children who are without education as well as the other complications that have resulted from this situation. It is true that there are agreed international standards that should be considered when planning a school, but complying with these standards requires some conditions which are not available in Iraq such as peace and settlement, flexible financial sources and healthy social and administrative structure. To the majority of the interviewees in this part, being realistic is an urge because planning luxurious schools and paying attention to details, which happens in the Western countries, is not practical and targets should be affordable and achievable within the limits of the current situation. Funds are not generously available and they can be stopped any time. The most pressurising issue is to find a shelter to protect the children from being lost and taken and abused by certain gangs. This confirms the idea that school planning and design are affected by the country climate where they are done and they cannot be separated from the political, economic and social as well as administrative conditions in which the country is living. Interviewee 7, General Director, adds another challenge which is about how religious and tribal leaders abuse their authority and position and control some aspects of the planning process of the school building delivery process. This is, as mentioned above, related to the structure of the Iraqi society and the beliefs and traditions that rule it and also the merging between religion and tribes and the political and administrative issues.

The next section will deal with the challenges which face stakeholders at the organising stage.

#### **A- Challenges of the Organising stage: (Table 2 in the Appendix)**

The Organising stage is the stage when duties and jobs are distributed and appointed to suitable people who have experience and skills as well as knowledge to perform the duties assigned.

The challenges that face stakeholders in a school building delivery process at the Organising stage can be grouped into two main sets. The first set of challenges at the Organising stages are related to the fact that the stakeholder at the organising stage will assign tasks and organise activities to people according to their skills and experience:



*The challenges that face us in the organising stage are how to assign tasks to the appropriate people who have a proven experience and skills as well as knowledge and loyalty and honesty. When we appoint people for finance and monitoring we need a lot of thinking and investigation to choose people who are keen to meet the objectives in the best way and who care about the money and time of the project (Interviewee 1 Governor).*

It is the stage where responsibility is shared and all work as a team. This will help stop blaming other people and face responsibilities:

*The situation in Iraq is as follows: everyone blames the other for not maintaining schools or rebuilding new schools. Education Ministry says that there is a huge need for rebuilding new schools but the situation is still the same: classrooms are overcrowded, students do not find a place to sit, sanitation facilities are not there. We need to manage everything and assign the right people for the tight tasks (Interviewee 2, Councillor).*

Everyone should be responsible in their own domain as far as that everyone has been appointed the right job:

*The challenges are that everything should be placed in the right place and basing everything in the right place and assigning duties to the appropriate people (Interviewee 10, planning officer)*

What creates the difficulties in this stage when people are assigned their duties and work is not the assignment itself; rather it is the factors that interfere with assigning jobs and duties such as belonging to the same tribe as the person who decides the duties and jobs, being connected with a person in a higher position or other social and political considerations:

*The organising and the challenges would be the initial appointing of the correct people for the different positions. In the position of Director General it can be difficult as people in a higher position can try to place people into a position which they are unsuitable for. This can be because they are family members or friends. This can be a major challenge. (Interviewee 7, Director General).*

Being the right person for the right job is essential for the success of work without any tribal, religious or personal considerations:

*Finding the skilled and experienced people is essential and assigning the right job for the right person is also a key matter. Sometimes we face the problem that someone is assigned*

*for a job because he is connected to the project sponsor or site manager. Finding the right person in the right place is so essential. Also persons assigned should be ready to carry out the instructions given by the architect and without showing arrogance and disobedience for personal reasons (Interviewee 8, Architect)*

What deepens the problem in the distant areas in Iraq is the centralisation that complicates the process of school building and increases the concern. Everything should be agreed by and pass through the capital and the central authority. Distant areas are not receiving enough attention and are not given some space to administer their affairs independently:

*The challenges are that related to centralisation and the difficulties we have in assigning duties to different people. We need to assign people from outside the city and this takes times and effort to finish the procedures. Distant cities do not receive the same attention as the capital. Projects are delayed and money is wasted for reasons such as these (Interviewee 11, procurement officer)*

The second group of challenges at the Organising stage are the ones that are related to the nature of the Iraqi culture which is a Collectivist culture where the loyalty and devotion of the person are to the group values and principles and not to the public interests. Team work and spirit cannot be achieved in Collectivist cultures and communication with the members of the Collectivist culture is difficult because they do not accept the different opinions and points of view. Dialogue is not possible with members of this culture; the matter which makes the task of the stakeholder challenging and exhausting:

*The issue that makes the challenge in the organising stage is that there is no co-ordination between the departments in the sense that everyone does their work independently of the others. There is not sharing in the opinions or perspectives. We all need to draw upon the skills and experience of each other from within the Ministry and the partners and suppliers. We all need to define and justify the need of building new schools and agree and quantify the benefits that will be produced from the project. We need to agree on a defined plan. But as I have mentioned the challenge is that most of us are not used to work in a team. (Interviewee 3 Educational officer)*

The language of dialogue seems difficult and pointless when the other person does not accept any different point of view and they are strict in their attitudes:

*The challenges that face me as an architect when designing a school in Iraq are that I need to deal with other stakeholders and we are still in need to develop the dialogue and communication culture to reach a conclusion. Some stakeholders want to impose their opinion and they use their position to give orders rather than communicate. I need to know about the budget, the land, the number of students who are going to enrol and the number of staff and teachers and the aims and objectives of the Ministry of education, the Ministry of Construction. What makes the difficulty is the hierarchal relationships dominant everywhere and which form an obstacle to get smoothly the information you want (Interviewee 4, Architect)*

Interviewee 9, Engineer finds a solution to overcome this challenge by being friendly, a good listener and authoritative in his approach to the employees:

*Again this stage is about contacting with people and assigning jobs to them. I need to be in contact with the site manager, the builders, the finance officer, the planning officer and assign everyone their own duties. I need to be both scientific and friendly, authoritative and a good listener in my approach, I need to be a teacher, an engineer and a supervisor (Interviewee, 9, Engineer)*

The financial issues are also present at this stage in the sense that the limited funds and budget drive the stakeholder to adopt the policy of value for money and being cautious when organising purchases and payments:

*The stage is about managing cash flows and budgets liaising with different organisations so at this stage I need to make sure that everything is organised and the payments are within the budget boundaries and that monthly management reports are prepared. A high level of attention to details is required and being well-organised is a must. I also need to ensure that the best value for money is implemented in all purchases and services. I need to record every payment and be transparent and sensitive to every detail. (Interviewee 6, Finance Officer)*

To sum up this section about the challenges that stakeholders face at the Organising stage. It can be said that these challenges can be assembled into two groups. The first group includes the challenges that emanate from the fact that the Organising stage is about appointing jobs and duties to suitable people who have sufficient skills and knowledge to perform the jobs. The challenge at this point is that there are other irrelevant issues that determine this appointment such as the relatedness to the people in charge and belonging to the same tribe as the person who appoints. The second group of challenges spring from the nature and structure

of the Iraqi society where Collectivist culture dominates and the devotion is to the tribe and society values and principles and not to the public interests. Members of Collectivist culture do not accept any opinion which is different from theirs. Team work is also a challenge because the members do not share any points of view because they want to gain the acceptance and praise of the head or high authority. This makes dialogues and communication very difficult and a challenging matter. The financial limitations are also present due to the economic circumstances that Iraq is witnessing.

### **B- Challenges of the Implementing stage: (Table 3 in the Appendix)**

At the Implementing stage all plans are realised. It is related to the two previous stages and it mirrors any gaps or errors in them. Data on this point demonstrate that the vast majority of the interviewees have identified this stage as the stage that reflects the previous stages of Planning and Organising. The major point is meeting the deadline and completion time to avoid wasting more time and money. That is what makes this stage a delicate and sensitive stage which can be the cause of disappointment. For example, Interviewee 6, Finance Officer

*The challenges at this stage are that any weakness in the planning or organising stage will be reflected and gaps appear and filling them will be too expensive. The challenge at this stage is also to ensure that the project will be completed on time because longer time after the due time means losing money. Also being prepared for the unexpected in terms of finance is also important and here comes the finance officer ability to manage and consider unexpected purchases and payments (Interviewee 6, Finance Officer)*

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Interviewee 7, Director General has emphasised the same point that the Implementing stage shows all the gaps and errors in the Planning and Organising stages:

*The challenges that can occur in the implementing stage of the school can be that there is any kind of weakness in the plan. Another challenge is that each group keeps to its time frame so the work can continue. Any delay can cause a major delay and disruption. Which also can have serious implications on the budget (Interviewee 7, Director General).*

Interviewee 1 Governor and Interviewee 8, Architect focus on the point that some unexpected and unplanned issues may appear in the Implementing stage and which are costly:

*The challenges that face the implementing stage in the process of school building delivery are that whether the objectives of the projects that have been planned in the planning stage are realised, whether there are any unexpected unplanned elements that have not been included in the objectives and goals. Meeting the requirements of construction and achieving the target within the specified timeframe and budget and in the least disruptive way are also a challenge. (Interviewee 1 Governor)*

*It is a challenging time because it means that our plans and ideas will be brought to life and the challenge is that if there is any gap or weakness in the planning stage, it will be manifested and it will cost double to fill the gap and repair weakness. This stage is the mirror that reflects the architect's mistakes and challenges. (Interviewee 8, Architect)*

And so does Interviewee 10, planning officer

*The challenges are that any gap in the planning and organising stages will be revealed at this stage and a kind of feedback and assessment. This stage assesses what we have done previously. (Interviewee 10, planning officer)*

Interviewee 4, Architect points out that the challenges that may spring from the Implementing stage are those that are created as a result of misinformation or incomplete information about the school such as the student number, the room number, or the cost of the building:

*The challenges that face an architect in the implementing stage is when arrive at the implementing stage and you discover that you have been given incomplete information about the number of students, teachers, rooms and other things, that you have been given incomplete or may be wrong information about the funding, the distribution of funding and the organising the funding, and that you have been misinformed about the nature of the land and the environment. (Interviewee 4, Architect)*

Interviewee 12, Finance Officer has identified the implementation stage as a “tense time” and “a mixture of the senses of achievement and feeling tense”:

*It is the harvest time and everything has been prepared for these moments but it is a tense time and the stage that shows whether we have been doing the right thing. I know that there is nothing perfect but errors can be fatal and cost a lot. So this stage is a mixture of having a sense of achievement and feeling tense (Interviewee 12, Finance Officer).*

The financial situation also plays its role in shaping this stage and affecting the way it is achieved. Implementing the school building project is affected by the budget and funds have been planned and organised in the two previous stages. The effectiveness and speed of achieving the Implementing stage are linked with how funds are planned and organised:

*In the procurement which is the process of purchasing goods and services we need to ensure that there is a strategy which helps us achieving our goals. This means that we should be aware of the risks and what can be an obstacle early in the planning and organising stages. Finance is the base of any project so it should be planned and organised in an effective way. We also need to achieve the equation of low cost and good quality and we should learn how to prioritise essential things over less essential. (Interviewee 11, procurement officer).*

Interviewee 2, Councillor also pays a greater attention to the financial conditions and how far they affect the effectiveness of achieving the Implementing stage:

*Because there is chaos in the organising stage, implementing stage can face some difficulties which are related to the completion date, the conflicting views of different stakeholders due to the lack of collaboration in the organisation stage. The procedure will be also affected by the funding which can be problematic in post-conflict Iraq. The success in the implantation stage reflects successful organising and planning. (Interviewee 2, Councillor)*

Interviewee 3 Educational officer goes further in explaining how funds affect the school building project claiming that funds can stop at any time and that creates the “biggest challenge” which leads to that the “process of actual building is paralysed”:

*The biggest challenge that faces the implementing stage is the stop of the fund flow without obvious reason and hence the process of actual building is paralysed. On a number of occasions, the Construction firms were paid by the Ministry of Education to build new schools but no new schools were rebuilt. This is due to the lack of constructive communication between stakeholders and the basis of monitoring and assessment. (Interviewee 3 Educational officer)*

Interviewee 5, Procurement officer recommends following a strategy which is appropriate to the aims and objectives and also to the financial limitations which the post-conflict Iraq is experiencing:

*It is true that procurement is the process of purchasing goods and services, but during the implementing time we need to ensure that we follow a strategy which is compatible with the objectives and the plan of the project. This means that we have to consider financing, cost, speed, quality the specific limitations of the project and risk. (Interviewee 5, Procurement officer).*

Interviewee, 9, Engineer recommends self-assessment and reflection to be able to recognise the challenges and gaps before it is too late. The culture of self-assessment is not strongly present in the Iraqi society and there is an urge to cultivate it in order to positively face the problems and find solutions to them:

*This stage is the time to see whether you have done the right thing in the planning and organising stages. It is self- challenge and reflecting on the planning is needed in this stage. I am so worried when it comes to implementing stage and I start asking myself about if I have done the right thing. We always tend to blame others when we do something wrong and I think we should stop this habit. Self-assessment is essential and reflection is positive. We should all learn to assess what we are doing in a positive way. (Interviewee, 9, Engineer)*

To sum up, the challenges in the Implementing stage come from the fact that this stage reflects all the errors, gaps and challenges that could have been produced in the Planning and Organising stages. Incomplete information, misinformation, gaps in planning finance and budget and maps may all appear at this stage. Unexpected and unplanned issues that may appear in the Implementing stage also affect the effectiveness and speed of this stage. Financial conditions are present and they have their impact on the effectiveness of this stage. Self- assessment and reflection are recommended for a more successful implementing stage. In the next section, the challenges that rise in the legislative stage will be discussed as data demonstrate.

### **C- Challenges of the Legislative stage: (Table 4 in the Appendix)**

Legislative stage is where the law and regulations about planning, designing and building a school are enforced. A school building should comply with the government laws and regulations in order to be acceptable and achievable.

The main challenges that emerge at the Legislative stage of the school building delivery are that the previous legislations of school building and design cannot cope with the requirements

of the current era, and that new legislations should be issued to meet the needs of the current time, and that there are too many legislations which are involved in the project of school building. The other challenge is that legislations need to be flexible and compatible with the requirements of the post-conflict period. The first priority when planning and designing a school building is that there are no problems related to the land which will be the site of the new school:

*We have to make sure that the land is problem-free and it does not belong to any specific side such as the agriculture or oil or that it is part of a plan for roads and transport. The search for these points is time-consuming and it requires long procedures (Interviewee 1 Governor).*

Since building a school is about not only constructing the actual building but also about human beings and their lives, well-being and safety, several legislations are involved to protect these human beings and guarantee their well-being and safe. However, what increases the challenge is the bureaucracy that dominates the system of ministries in Iraq and the hierarchal structure that rules every issue of administration. This prevents things to go smoothly and creates obstacles in the face of achieving any project:

*There are a lot of legislations that rule the process of school building delivery in Iraq. A lot of ministries are involved: education, construction and housing, health, oil, transport. You can imagine the difficulties we face when we want to plan and organise or implement the project with the bureaucracy and hierarchy that exist in the ministries (Interviewee 2, Councillor)*

To be effective, legislations should meet the requirements of the current time and situations and they also should be able to cope with the changes that have taken place:

*The challenge that is related to this stage comes from the turbulent circumstances that happened in Iraq. Legislations are different now and more legislations are needed to cope with the changes that took place in Iraq. We are planning for a new democratic era so we need to transfer our legislations in a way to be compatible with the new society. We need more access to education for disabled people, more accessible education for girls, more inclusive education, more development for teacher training and new curriculum. (Interviewee 3 Educational officer).*

However, according to Interviewee 4, Architect, Project 2, Interviewee 8, Architect, Interviewee 10, planning officer, Interviewee 11, procurement officer, and Interviewee 12,



Finance Officer, the problems which they face at the legislative stage are that there are too many legislations to be enforced in the project, and that these legislations were issued at a different time and different circumstances to the current ones. Legislations should be suitable to the current situation and should take into considerations the changes that took place in the last few decades:

*Designing a school building involves a lot of legislations and laws which need be taken into account for the safety and security of the building and its users. The difficulty with these legislations is that they belong to different source and I need to be aware of all of them and enforce them in the planning.* (Project 2, Interviewee 8, Architect).

These legislations cause a debate and confusion because they were created for different purposes and times as well as for different political and social goals:

*A lot of legislations are set for the project of building a school. Sometimes these legislations are controversial because they are established for different times and circumstances. A lot of cases at present do not have the appropriate legislations due to the circumstance that Iraq underwent* (Interviewee 10, planning officer).

The same idea was expressed by Interviewee 11, procurement officer:

*The challenge is that we need to be aware of plenty of legislations and rules in order to achieve the project properly. The other challenge is that the legislations which we have at present came from an era which is different from the present time in terms of the concept of school building, relationships, and goals. We need updated legislations which cope with the present life and requirements.*

And Interviewee 12, Finance Officer

*The challenges are that a lot of legislations do not suit the current time and do not cope with the needs of the country at this stage of transformations. Legislations have been created for another time and other circumstances. Time has changed and we need legislations that meet our current needs. Legislations should be updated from time to time and every city should have its special rules and laws because each one has a different context. What can be applied in Baghdad may not be so in another city.*

Interviewee 11, procurement officer and Interviewee 12, Finance Officer emphasise the idea that legislations need to be updated and new legislations should be issued which meet the needs of the era which are different for the era for which these legislations were established. The words “present time, present, change, different, and update” are used in describing the legislations and the need to change.

To sum up, the Legislative stage has challenges which can be discussed in two parts. The first part is that the available legislations are not updated and they cannot cope with the requirements of the new era and the new aims and goals of building a school. The second part is that these legislations need to be appropriate with the requirements of the post-conflict Iraq and what it really needs.

The discussion of the challenges that every stage in the school building process has fulfilled the first research objective and *Explore the school building delivery process challenges in Iraq*.

#### 4.2. Strengths and Challenges of every stage of the school building process:

The second theme that thematic analysis has yielded is the positive and negative of every stage of the school building project. The positive issues of every stage will be discussed and then the negative ones.

##### 4.2.1. The positive and the negative issues of the stages of school building process

The discussion of the positive and the negative issues of every stage in the process of school building meets the second and third research objectives: *Explore the positive issues in every stage of school building process in Iraq* and *Explore the negative issues in every stage of school building process in Iraq*

##### **A- The positive issues of the Planning stage (Table 5 in the Appendix)**

The significance of the Planning stage is that it gives hope to people both stakeholders and parents and children that they are surviving despite the “catastrophic circumstances” that Iraq has experienced. It give a reason to survive and wait to see the plans implemented:

*This stage of planning allows us the opportunity to place all the plans and brainstorm what is needed by the students and the teachers. This stage gives us hope that we are still surviving despite all the catastrophic circumstances which we went through. (Interviewee 3 Educational officer).*

Interviewee 2, Councillor points to the fact that plans should take into considerations the urgent needs of Iraqi children and society. Planning does not mean going too far in dreaming and expectations; rather there should be realistic and affordable achievable targets. Building schools at present is to protect children from being homeless and victims of gangs and violence. What makes the Planning stage more effective is its being realistic and prioritising:

*This stage helps use look at the needs, the realistic needs and prioritise. We are in a situation that we need to think about planning as a response to the needs of the children. While in other developed countries, planning is about how to make schools an ideal place for children to attain the highest achievement, we need to plan for the highly necessary needs. Schools in Iraq lack sanitation facilities, walls are crumbling, roofs are leaking and windows are broken. Planning enables us to see the priorities and work towards achieving the basic needs. We are people that look at school as the fastest way for peace building in this era and when we are settles and our country is secure we will move to another stage for considering other luxurious issues* (Interviewee 2, Councillor)

For another group of interviewees Planning stage is important because it helps in setting the objectives and giving order and guide. These group members have already realised the significance of the Planning stage and how it affects the whole process of school building. To these group members, Planning stage has the advantage of, added to setting objectives and goals, making stakeholders avoid disappointment and become ready to face unexpected circumstances. In addition, good planning means good foundation and strong base for the project and less frustration in the Implementing stage.

Interviewee 1 Governor believes that Planning stage makes the project goals defined and clear, and it also adds guidelines and order to the project. It is the stage where the project is created:

*Planning emphasise the objectives of the project and make them defined and clear, it helps the employees to focus on the objectives and be aware of them which is a helpful guideline, and planning gives order and guide to the project. With planning the stakeholders avoid disappointment and become ready for unexpected circumstances* (Interviewee 1 Governor)

Likewise, Interviewee 7, Director General has emphasised the idea that Planning stage is the stage where plans are created and which also gives order and guidance to everyone. It creates the motives to make people continue in the project and realise the plans:

*We see the strengths of the planning stage to have a well-structured plan. This gives order to the plan so each group/department and individual knows their position and what they have to do. The strength of the planning stage also gives guidance and direction to all participants in achieving the main goal which is the delivery of school buildings (Interviewee 7, Director General).*

Like in the Governor's data, Interviewee 8, the Architect's data also include the words "unexpected circumstances" when identifying the strengths of the Planning stage in the sense that it should include plans and preparations about how to deal with unforeseen circumstances later in the project:

*It tells everything about the project and it prepares everyone to how to deal with unexpected circumstances. It is also about establishing the foundation and the better planning is the more smoothly the project runs. Planning is also about discovering the gaps in the project and getting ready to avoid or fill these gaps (Interviewee 8, Architect).*

To sum up, the positive points of the Planning stage spring from that it involves creating plans that will be realised later in the Implementing stage; the matter which gives hope to both stakeholders and parents and children that they are surviving despite the "catastrophic circumstances". One important positive feature of the Planning stage in Iraq is that planning does not mean going too far in dreaming and expectations; rather there should be realistic and affordable achievable targets. Planning should take the Iraqi context into account and it should be *realistic and should prioritise*. Moreover, the term of "unexpected circumstances" is repeated in some interviewees' data to emphasise the fact that planning stage should include sub-plans to encounter unexpected circumstances which can be present especially in a context like the Iraqi context where everything is uncertain; a characteristic which is typical of post-conflict countries.

#### **A- The negative issues of the Planning stage (Table 5 in the Appendix)**

However, despite the positive points of Planning stage which the participants have expressed, this stage still has its negative points. These negative points can be summarised into two sets. The first set of the negative points of Planning stage in the school building projects refer to the fact that stakeholders should take into account the restrictions of funding and budget which shape how planning takes place. The stakeholders should take into account the financial limitations and plan accordingly; the matter which limits their abilities and interests:

*The negative issue of school building delivery process at planning is how to be realistic and how to make balance between reality and your capability. Planning for a school may sound affordable but the difficulty is whether this planning takes into account the limitations of the reality of Iraq in terms of funding, procedures and even how people feel about sending their children, particularly girls, in this era which is still not secure enough (Interviewee 2, Councillor).*

These limitations, especially the financial limitations, may influence the creativity of the designers and encourage other non-specialised people to interfere with the plans and designs for money-saving sake:

*Planning can be hassle when there is a contradiction between how the architect believes should be and how the project sponsor and cost payer want the project to be. Sometimes, non-specialised people interfere with my business as an architect and try to impose their opinion on me and the motive can be either to save money or space (Interviewee 8, Architect)*

In fact, the financial issues have changed the priorities of school building and its goals. The main concern is not how ideal a school is in terms of sport halls, laboratories and music halls; the main concern is to build a shelter to contain the children and protect them from the dangers of the street in a post-conflict country like Iraq:

*The negative side comes from that we cannot control the budget. Sometimes we have to deal with reality and accept it in terms of the money allocated to the project. We are having a hard time and we need to be aware of how to achieve something for people with less money. We cannot compare ourselves with ideal situations. What is required now is a school that protects children and shelters them from the dangers of being in street and being easy victims for gangs and violence. We have a lot of aspirations but we know we cannot achieve all of them only necessary things (Interviewee 12, Finance Officer).*

The fact that a number of school building projects failed before they were implemented has become a nightmare that, due to financial hardships, every school building project is liable to collapse:

*What creates the challenges in this stage are the repeated experiences which we have had about planning for many schools but no one has come to life. It is the fear that the experience will be repeated and that we are planning for fake schools. But I am not pessimistic I am hopeful that we will get there and build our schools Interviewee 3 Educational officer*

The other set of negative points of the Planning stage are that a lot of communication and contact with different types of people are required at this stage. The lack of dialogue language is a crucial factor but this is hardly available. This is due to the strictly formal relations between members and ministries and also to the hierarchal structure of society which everyone should respect and take into consideration. The lack of dialogue has led to that the stakeholders have to do what they are required from those who are above them in the hierarchy even if they are not convinced with what they are doing:

*The challenges of this stage lie in the fact that a lot of negotiation skills are required and sometimes I need to negotiate with people who are ranked higher than me in the hierarchal pattern where formal language and formal relations dominate. Also, getting the right information about the budget and funds is also important because this makes it clear to me to perform in the light of the available budget* Interviewee 5, Procurement officer

The lack of communication is reflected in the absence of transparency and openness which may lead to the failure of the project:

*The challenges of planning for me as an architect come from that fact that very little transparency can be found between stakeholders and ministries. We need to know about the funding, the difficulties and limitations. Planning to build a school is a so sensitive matter which can be affected by a lot of things if there was no openness or directness. Planning based on non- understandable issues will lead to the failure of the project and the sequence of many disappointments in later stages* (Interviewee 4, Architect).

In a project like school building, communication among the stakeholders and ministries as well as other organisations is a must, but what hinders communication is the hierarchal structures and the strictly formal relations among the people in charge. As members of a Collectivist culture, people in Iraq generally do not consider the different opinions and they even consider them as rivals:

*The challenges of this stage come from the fact that since I need a lot of contact with other people and organisation I face difficulties in communication because people are different and do not have the same perspectives. A lot of pressure is placed on me to communicate with people who are not satisfied with the payments or who compare the payments of the project with other organisation payments. We cannot pay as other organisations the budget specified for the school building is limited and it is our belief of the role schools play in rebuilding the country what motivates us and not the payment. The other weakness is that we need to quit*

*many things in the project because the budget does not allow us. We take care of the necessary things at this stage* (Interviewee 6, Finance Officer)

The other negative point which is also related to the Iraqi society structure is the centralisation of authority and administration where everything should be accepted and agreed on in the Capital and should pass through a bureaucratic process which consumes a long time and needlessly costs money:

*The other negative point of this stage is the centralisation of everything in this country. Everything should go through the capital channels and then come back to us which is a waste of time, we do not have a lot of facilities because we do not live in the capital and this a problem. We need the permission from the centre to do anything so the difficulties start from the planning stage* Interviewee 11, procurement officer.

To sum up, despite that it has a number of positive points, Planning stage in the school building process has a number of negative issues. These can be grouped into two cohorts. The first cohort of these negative points are represented in the difficulties that rise in this stage due to financial limitations and hardship. The hard financial situation makes planning controlled and shaped by the budget and limited funding. Designers and people who plan have to give up several requirements of a school planning in order to stay within the borders of the allocated funds. The second cohort of this stage negative points are resulted from the fact that the language of dialogue and communications among parties is not available due to the hierarchal structure of the Iraqi society where Collectivist culture dominates. Accepting different opinions is not very possible and even considering different opinions as rivals is a characteristic of the Collectivist society such as Iraq. In other words, this stage is influenced by the financial, political and cultural situation of Iraq.

#### **B- The positive issues of the Organising stage (Table 6 in the Appendix)**

Like the Planning stage, Organising stage has positive and negative issues according to the data.

Interviewee 1 Governor defines the organising stage in a school building project as:

*At this stage all the project's stages, and activities are identified and assigned to each team member and mapping them to a timeline to measure key dates that are used to keep track of work progress. These areas are so important because they reflect the progress of a project* (Interviewee 1 Governor)

Interviewee 2, Councillor, also links the Organising stage with the vision of the project on the one hand, and with the Implementing stage on the other hand. It is the stage where everyone is aware of their roles and duties:

*In the organising stage the vision of the project becomes clear and the atmosphere becomes ready to start implementing. This stage is about working how to prepare for the actual construction process. Everyone should be aware of their roles to play and be responsible for fulfilling this role* (Interviewee 2, Councillor).

Interviewee 3, Educational officer, also emphasises Interviewee 2, Councillor's point of view and defines the Organising stage as the stage where people recognise their roles:

*Everything is made clear and explained starting from project management planning, cost management, time management, quality management and contract and safety management* (Interviewee 3 Educational officer).

Understanding is also linked with the Organising stage in the sense that the word *understand* is repeated for a few times to reflect the function of this stage in making every role and duty and management understood:

*The whole project is made explained and defined and the challenges and strengths of the project become understood* (Interviewee 3 Educational officer)

Interviewee 4, Architect used the word *understand* as the outcome of this stage. Similarly, the word *roles* is also used to reflect how roles are distributed and assigned to people at this stage:

*Organising stage is about distributing the roles for everyone to perform. It is about money management, engineering issues management, and other managements with other stakeholders. It involves that everyone understands their role and how they contribute to the success of the project. From this comes the necessity that skilled and experienced people should be selected to take part in the project. What is more important is the willingness to achieve something for this country that has been torn by subsequent wars and conflicts* (Interviewee 4, Architect).

Interviewee 7, Director General, Project 2 expressed the same idea that Organising stage is about assigning roles to people and duties, but different terms were used:



*Each person involved will know their position and what is expected from them. This is the strength of the school building delivery process. Each group and individual has their plan of work and when they all complete their allocated task the whole process comes together to create the school building.*

The Organising stage in the project of school building supports stakeholders in organising things and clarifying every issue related to the project. Jobs are assigned to people who are specialised and skilled and the right jobs should be allocated to the right people: *right people* and *right place* are repeated in the data of two interviewees:

*The strengths are that the planning officer has the advantage of deciding many issues and putting things in the right place. The strengths of this stage also are that all the networks that establish the project are controlled by the planning officer* (Interviewee 10, planning officer)

*It is helpful to distribute jobs and duties to the persons involved in the project. Funding is given to finance people, delivery to procurement people and so on. It takes the burden of the architect because he has not to do everything. It also shows the skill of the architect to find the right people in the right place* (Interviewee, 9 , Engineer).

To sum up, like the Planning stage, Organising stage, demonstrates some positive sides which can be identified as enabling stakeholders to organise and guide the work and assign the right jobs to the right people. Another positive point is that it is the stage where everything is made clear and understood. It is also about preparing for the Implementing stage.

### **C- The negative issues of the Organising stage (Table 6 in the Appendix)**

The negative sides that the Organising stage demonstrated are similar to those of the Planning stage. These sides are shaped by both the financial hardships which the country is experiencing and the difficulties in communicating between parties in a society ruled by hierarchal structure and strictly formal relationships as well as Collectivist culture. The Organising stage requires a lot of contact and communication among parties in order everyone understands their roles and duties. The difficulty that emanates from this stage is that Iraq is a country ruled by hierarchal patterns that are available everywhere. The person who is lower than another in the hierarchy should respect and obey the second person who is above. The lower-positioned person is not expected to suggest or argue with the higher-positioned person. This makes communication a hard issue:

Interviewee 2, Councillor believes that this affects transparency at work and feeds the competitive spirit instead of the co-operative or team spirit:

*In Iraq, there are a number of limitations for this stage which are related to the nature of hierarchal authority which depends on the person of a higher rank to give orders that should be carried out by the lower-ranked person. A dialogue is not usually established between persons. Also in Iraq working together is not available in the sense that everyone want to work separately to get credit from the higher-ranked persons. Organising stage needs collaboration among the stakeholder which is a matter not possible in Iraq (Interviewee 2, Councillor)*

The success of any project depends on the collaboration of the parties in charge and not on competition. This competitive spirit is explained in terms of everyone's desire to please those who are at the higher position of the hierarchy for personal gains and benefits:

*What creates the challenges in this stage is the fact that we are not used to work as a team and we all have the competitive spirit rather than collaborative one. We all need to prove we are good to those who are ranked higher than us. We do not collaborate because we are afraid that the others steal our success. But this era requires us to behave differently*

(Interviewee 3 Educational officer)

Interviewee 4, Architect also emphasises the idea of cooperation which is an important factor to rebuild the country:

*Building schools and countries need hard work and cooperation. Everyone should understand that they have a particular role to perform and to create new future for the coming generations*

(Interviewee 4, Architect)

Cultivating the culture of dialogue is also essential in order to build a democratic country. Dialogues can help overcoming obstacles and exchanging opinions and knowledge:

*The challenges of this stage is facing people from different types and assigning them their duties. Negotiating with different people is a hard thing and it can lead to clashes if dialogue is not established. Failing to negotiate is a learned behaviour which we need some time to excel in (Interviewee 10, planning officer)*

Interviewee 6, Finance Officer, points out that the uncertainty of the Iraqi situation is intensified by the *hierarchal patterns* and bureaucratic mentality. They both make stakeholders feel that they are not in control of everything:

*As we are passing through a time of uncertainty in Iraq, a lot of things which are unpredicted may occur such as stopping the funding in the mid of the project or suppliers do not keep their word because of one reason or another. The challenges of the organising stage come from the fact that I as a finance officer cannot guarantee everything because I do not have the initiative of everything. We are ruled by a hierarchal patterns and a bureaucratic mentality so I cannot pretend to have control over a lot of things which are within the boundaries of my interest* (Interviewee 6, Finance Officer)

Interviewee 5, Procurement officer, emphasised the idea of not being in control due to the political, financial and economic conditions of the country. These conditions also affect suppliers, deliveries and purchases:

*The challenges of this stage are that there are a set of things in terms of procurement which are out of my control. Sometimes I face a difficulty with suppliers abroad due to the weakness of the Internet connection and social media, and also delivery times are not accurate because of the circumstances of Iraq. Sometimes commitment with the promise suppliers have given is lacked and this is due to the weakness of legislations enforced that make them keep their word* (Interviewee 5, Procurement officer)

As a reflection to the structure of Iraqi society is the proliferation of favouritism where people are hired at some jobs not because they are qualified but because they know somebody in a higher position of the hierarchy or they are related to a religious leader or a political personnel:

*Weakness can be that unqualified people are not capable of working/managing the positions that they are in. This causes difficulties as their incompetency is destructive in the case of the time line, cost and the morale of the work force* (Interviewee 7, Director General).

The other factor that is related to the structure of Iraqi society is favouritism which refers to the case that people are hired not because of their qualifications but because of their relatedness to a person whose position is higher in the hierarchy:

*The nature of our society can be a weakness in the organising stage in the sense that people might do a job they are not skilled in or because they know one of the stakeholders. Also,*

*some people in our society do not accept directions or instructions and they prefer to do what they want to do because they think it is humiliating to do what other people tell them to do. The culture of dialogue is missed in our society and we need to build it if we want to succeed.* (Project 2, Interviewee 8, Architect)

The other negative point of the Organising stage is the less attention that the distant areas receive from the government and how centralisation affects the procedures of the school building process negatively. Interviewee 11, procurement officer describes the obstacles that distant areas are experiencing as demotivating:

*I feel that sometimes I am not control everything because I cannot access suppliers and I cannot contact them due to the weakness of the net connection and the delay in mail delivery. People are not very encouraged to deal with projects in distant cities because this is risky. I really feel that I cannot control anything which makes me demotivated.* Interviewee 12, Finance Officer has mentioned the difficulties of centralisation which also add to the sense of uncertainty that the country is experiencing:

*There are two issues. First, since the country is passing a transformational stage, it is a time of uncertainty and no one can predict the future. Budgets can change or stop so we have to always be ready for alternatives. The other problem is that the centralisation of everything. We have to get everything ready from the capital and which causes a waste of time and money. Decentralisation can solve a lot of our problems.*

To sum up, the negative side of the Organising stage has the same source as those of the Planning stage. The negative issues of both stages are derived from the fact that Iraq is passing through a period of uncertainty which is typical of any post-conflict country, but the nature and structure of Iraq worsens the uncertainty that prevails the country. The hierarchal structure, the Collectivist culture and the bureaucratic mentality all make achieving a project a very hard task. These factors hinder accepting different opinions and negotiations because everyone think they represent the right perspective. The competitive spirit is also present because everyone attempts to please those who are in a higher position. Everyone, consequently, works for their personal gains not for the team interests. This makes team work difficult to be achieved. Another problem that deepens the negative aspect of the Organising and also the Planning is the centralisation and distant areas. Distant areas do not receive appropriate attention and this paralyses any development in these areas. The positive aspects of the Implementing stage will be discussed in the following section.

#### **D- The positive issues of the Implementing stage (Table 7 in the Appendix)**

The data elicited from the interviewees demonstrated two issues as far as the positive aspect of the Implementing stage is concerned. The first issue refers to the description of this stage and the second issue points to its function. The Implementing stage is described by some interviewees as the “harvest time” (Interviewee 8, Architect; Interviewee, 9, Engineer). It is the stage where the plans are realised and the dream comes true (Interviewee 1 Governor; Interviewee 2, Councillor; Interviewee 3 Educational officer; Interviewee 6, Finance Officer; Interviewee 7, Director General; Interviewee, 9, Engineer; Interviewee 10, planning officer). The interviewees all agreed that the Implementing stage is the stage where the dreams become reality and what was planned for is going to be reality. The significance of this leads to the second issue which data demonstrated about the Implementing stage i.e. the function of this stage. To another group of interviewees the Implementing stage is metaphorically important because of the sense of achievement it produces within the stakeholders and the end users of the school. It gives these people some hope that the rebuilding process has started and they have survived the catastrophic circumstances (Interviewee 8, Architect; Interviewee 12, Finance Officer). This stage gives people the sense that the government authority is back and that there is a light at the end of the tunnel. The other function of the Implementing stage is that it assesses what has been planned and done in the Planning and Organising stages and whether there are any challenges and gaps. In other words, this stage shows the ability of the stakeholders to plan and carry out these plans: (Interviewee 4, Architect; Interviewee 5, Procurement officer; Interviewee 11, procurement officer). Interviewee 4, Architect points out that

*The stage of implementation, to me, is the stage where my ability as an architect is tested together with the ability of the other stakeholders. It is a discovery of our ability, skills and knowledge to design a school.*

Interviewee 5, Procurement officer emphasises the idea that the Implementing stage is useful to assess the two previous stages and whether the principle of quality was achieved:

*The strengths of this stage come from the fact that in the implementing stage we make sure that the principle of quality was applied by contractors and consultants who work in the project. This means we need to ensure that quality was achieved in the design aesthetic, appropriateness of the surrounding environment, how far the project is adapted to be*

*compatible with future requirement, and how maintaining the building can be easy* (Interviewee 5, Procurement officer).

The term of quality has been emphasised in the data elicited from Interviewee 11, procurement officer who states that this stage helps us recognise how far the principle of quality has been maintained in every step of the project:

*The strengths of this stage are that it can make us ensure that we have achieved quality in every step and that we could balance between low cost and good quality. It also shows the appropriateness of the design, equipment, furniture, services to the project and its goals. It also reveals how effective the funding and finance management is and how appropriate the building for future requirements* (Interviewee 11, procurement officer).

To sum up, the positive aspect of the Implementing stage in the project of school building in Iraq can be put into two issues. The first issue is about the description of this stage by the stakeholders and the second issue is about the function of this stage. Data elicited from the stakeholder interviewees showed that to many of them the Implementing stage is the harvest time and the time where dreams come true and plans are realised. It also gives devastated people in the post-conflict Iraq some hope that life continues and they have survived despite all the traumas they have witnessed. The second issue is about the function of this stage as seen by the stakeholder interviewees who believed that this stage is a good opportunity to assess what have been planned and decided and how far the principle of quality has been considered.

#### **E- The negative issues of the Implementing stage (Table 7 in the Appendix)**

Like the Planning and Organising stages, the Implementing stage has also its negative aspects. The basic theme about the challenges of the Implementing stage is that it reveals all the errors and gaps that have happened in the previous stages and in this case repair costs a lot of effort, time and money:

*The challenges of this stage come from the fact that any gap in planning and organising will affect the implementing of the project. The unpredicted issues can also hamper the progress of the project if we are not prepared for. The other weakness is that funding and budget may be made limited or even cut* (Interviewee 6, Finance Officer).

The same idea has been expressed by Interviewee 10, planning officer, who emphasised the idea that the Implementing stage reflects the errors and gaps of the previous stages:

*We are very tense that a mistake may appear in planning and organising and then we have to do things again at this advanced stage of the project.*

The Implementing stage not only reflects the errors and gaps in the previous stages but also it mirrors the financial situations and the hardship and its consequences on planning:

*Bad financial planning can lead to the disruption of the whole project in the implementation stage. Any evidence of corruption can have a disastrous consequence on implementing the project. A friction may be created between the community and the implementers regarding the completion date. The implementers work according to contracts, while the community has a more practical approach towards completion. The community believes that when the project starts to produce the benefits for which it is established, there is no need for spending more time and money on it (Interviewee, 1 Governor)*

Challenges at the Implementing stage are reduced to the failure to communicate with other parties and be aware of the gaps and shortages in a transparent way. This failure in communication calls back the challenges in the Planning and Organising stages where the structure of the Iraqi society, which is constituted by bureaucracy and hierarchical patterns as well as Collectivist culture, feeds these failures:

Interviewee 2, Councillor points to the failure of communication and bureaucracy as factors that foster the challenges in the Implementing stage:

*The challenges of the school building delivery process at the implementing stage are derived from that fact that any gap in the previous stages will impact negatively the school building delivery process and hinder it. The collaboration of all stakeholders is essential to fill all the gaps expected in this stage. Failure of communication about the project and every issue in it will lead to the failure of achieving the projects. Again bureaucracy is the basic problem and the hierarchical relationships among members of department and organisation (Interviewee 2, Councillor)*

Interviewee 3, Educational officer emphasises mismanagement and the lack of transparency as factors that lead to the failure in the Implementing stage:

*The weakness in this stage lies in that fact that any mismanagement or lack of transparency will be reflected at this stage and it is not correctable. Funding is a nightmare especially*

*nowadays with these tied circumstances. We do not feel relaxed till we see the actual building standing and children are coming into it. It is a hard time but we learn from our experience (Interviewee, 3, Educational officer).*

Interviewee 8, Architect points to the competitive spirit that rules the situation everywhere and which is a reminder of the challenges of the Planning and Organising stages. Stakeholders do not work as a team. They compete to please people in authority for personal benefits ignoring the public benefits and the country interests:

*The weakness of this stage comes from the fact that persons may not be working as a team and then they are waiting to catch other people's mistakes in case they are found. On the hand, the same people may attribute the success of this stage to their individual or personal efforts. In this culture, the success and the partial or complete failure are related to the architect alone, while planning, organising and implementing stages are a shared responsibility (Interviewee 8, Architect).*

Moreover, the negative aspects of this stage are the results of the values that are prevailing in the Iraqi society such as favouritism and appointing unqualified people for personal gains:

*The weakness of the implementing stage is when unqualified workers and corruption appears. This can have a devastating effect. This can cause delays, distrust and friction between the departments involved and the local communities (Interviewee 7, Director General).*

Data elicited from Interviewee 5, Procurement officer and Interviewee 11, procurement officer focused on the metaphorical meaning of the Implementing stage and how it should be achieved carefully because it means hope and it gives a lot of stimulation and encouragement to people who are seeking hope to survive:

*The weakness of the implementing stage comes from the fact that we need also to ensure that quality was applied in the service providers: how enthusiastic they are to perform their duties, how willing they are to make the project a success and how to stimulate them and create motivation for them to work hard and participate in the building process of their country. People are tired because of the wars and the economic situations and they need a lot of stimulating and encouraging to drive them to work hard and in a high quality (Interviewee 5, Procurement officer)*



In the Interviewee 11, procurement officer's data, *exhausted* is used to repeat the idea that Iraqi people are tired and in need of help and support and seeing the dream of school building plans realised makes them feel hopeful:

*The challenges come from the same source where the strengths come from. I mean implementing stage shows the gaps and errors in both planning and organising stages. Errors at this stage are costly and they require a lot of effort and money to repair. We are an exhausted people and we need one push forward so we need good implementing stage to get a sense of achievement that makes us feel hopeful. We need to create success out of the difficulties because at this stage we need hope to survive. We need to ignore lots of luxurious things and accept reality at the moment because we need to* (Interviewee 11, procurement officer)

To sum up, the negative aspects of the Implementing stage have the same sources of those of the Planning and Organising stages which are the structure of the Iraqi society which is characterised by the absence of transparency, Collectivist culture and hierarchal patterns. They all lead to failure in communication and inability to recognise the gaps and shortages in the project. The negative aspect of the Implementing stage is that it is strongly related and connected with the Planning and Organising stages and any gaps in the first will lead to gaps in the second. The success of the Implementing stage is crucial in giving people hope after years of destructions and war.

#### **F- The positive issues of the Legislative stage (Table 8 in the Appendix)**

Data elicited from the majority of the stakeholder interviewees showed that legislations are meant to protect the project and the school end users. Legislations enable the stakeholders to avoid problems and risks:

*The advantages of the legislative stage is ensuring that the process of school building is taking place in a legal way and it ensures the safety of everyone involved, This stage also enables us to avoid problems with any ministry or department. This stage should be activated at an early stage of the process of school building to avoid any disappointments at a more advanced stage of the building process. We need to make everything clear from any problem.*(Interviewee 1 Governor)

Being aware of the laws and legislations is essential, and applying these laws and legislations gives everyone the sense of security and safety:

*The strength of the legislative stage is that it enables the stakeholder to recognise all the laws that should be enforced in the project and it also guarantees the legal side of the project and makes its establishment lawful and up to the standards* (Interviewee 2, Councillor).

Interviewee, 3, Educational officer points out that *“The strengths come from the requirements that the school is in harmony with the laws”*. The term of “harmony with the laws” has been used to indicate the strength of the Legislative stage.

Other terms are used by Interviewee 4, Architect to point to the strength of the Legislative stage i.e. *to stay safe, secure and healthy, protect human beings, the distribution of windows, doors, gates, toilets and washing facilities, general health and safety, fire safety, lighting, water supplies, and outdoor space.*

According to Interviewee 8, Architect, *applying legislations brings safety and security to the project and when applying these legislations, stakeholders get the feeling that they have done something that protect people and carry out laws.*

Interviewee, 9, Engineer emphasised the need of legislations to make everything justified: *Every legislation is done for a reason and everything needs a legislation to justify it. It is a process of finding a justification for every issue.*

The terms of *feel secure* and *protection and safety* are also used by Interviewee 5, Procurement officer:

*The strengths of this stage are that everything is organised and identified so the procurement officer and the other employees feel secure that these laws and legislations provide protection and safety for the project. My job is to appoint roles and duties for the other employees so I need to be aware of the legislations that regulate relationships.*

Therefore, understanding the legislations and the laws makes everyone feel secure, safe and protected. Interviewee 11, procurement officer used the terms of: *Understanding legislation makes you feel safe and that you are doing the right and safe things; make you feel that you are meeting what is required of you; legislations you achieve equality among employees in terms of appointment, payment, holidays, and treatments; You also feel that your worry is less when you apply legislations.*

The function of the Legislative stage is so important because, according to the data, it gives everybody in the project a sense of achievement when they apply the legislations, a sense of safety and security is created because they have followed the rules and a sense of comfort is there because they avoid problems by complying with the legislations.

*A sense of achievement to me and I know that I am doing the right thing is what the legislative stage gives (Interviewee 12, Finance Officer).*

To sum up, a sense of security and safety is created when applying the legislations at the Legislative stage. It is the desire to produce a project that meets the legislation in order to guarantee the children and other end users' of the school. The terms of *safety*, *protection* and *feeling secure* are repeatedly used to describe the function of the Legislative stage. However, despite these strengths, this stage has its own challenges.

#### The negative issues of the Legislative stage (Table 8 in the Appendix)

The negative aspects of the Legislative stage are also resulted from the structure of the Iraqi society. Data elicited from the interviewees showed that the problems with the legislations related to school building are that they were created for a different era, purpose, context and learning aims, and they were rigid and not flexible:

*In Iraq, the legislative stage is problematic because of the involvement of many sides and every side works alone without the co-ordination with the other. The other weakness is that legislations are very rigid and they are not flexible in a way that take into account the contextual circumstances of a project (Interviewee 2, Councillor).*

There is a real need to issue legislations that are compatible with different learning aims and with the inclusive learning principles such as including the disabled children and children whose first language is not Arabic:

*The challenges are that as I have mentioned above we need new legislations that cope with the new circumstances and situations. We need legislations for special needs children facilities and disabled children and teachers as well as children whose first language is not Arabic (Interviewee 10, planning officer)*

Updating legislation is essential for ensuring people that a positive change has been achieved:

*Legislations need to be updated in Iraq to cope with the post-conflict period of time. People need to feel that something has changed and they deserve to have legislations that do not remind them of the hard times they have had for a long time (Interviewee 11, procurement officer).*

The other negative point related to the Legislative stage is that applying legislations may be hampered by the real world. The real world can be represented by the context-related issues that make applying legislations difficult. For example, in a classroom there is only a limited number of students allowed, but the real world in the Iraqi context forces schools to accept a larger number and make classrooms crowded to save the children from the dangers of street and educate them:

*The challenges of this stage come from the clash that happens between the legislation and the real world needs. For example, in a classroom only a limited number of children or students is allowed. But when the situation, the real situation of Iraq in financial terms, we need to comply with the real world requirements and build classrooms that accommodate more than the specified number (Interviewee, 9, Engineer)*

The other Iraqi context-related point of negativity of the Legislative stage is that applying legislation can contradict with the personal benefits of some parties, so they avoid implementing these legislations. This issue is the result of the absence of self- assessment and monitoring as well as transparency:

*The challenges appear when there is a contradiction between some profits of stakeholders and enforcing the legislations in the project. Ethical issues are a priority over money. To some people ignoring some legislation for the sake of the success of the project is not a big deal. This is not the culture we need in Iraq which is trying to build democracy and freedom. Safety starts from clean fresh water to strong and well-built pillars and walls (Interviewee 8, Architect)*

Similarly, failure to apply legislations can be due to the failure in communication among the parties and because of the culture of the one-opinion and not accepting different opinions:

*When your work involves contacting people, you expect to face a lot of problems. Some problems cannot be solved by appealing to legislations or laws. Dialogue and communication are the best way when you face a problem with a person who does not want*

*to take instructions for example, or another person who shows a different opinion and sticks to it. There are many difficulties that face me but I try to use dialogue and talking. You cannot force people to work hard if they do not want to, but may talking to them can lead to some kind of agreement.* (Interviewee 5, Procurement officer)

There was a call for change of legislations and how they are applied to achieve better results. However, those who called for change knew that it is not easy to change legislations because this involves political, social and cultural change:

*The challenges of this stage come from that fact that inserting new legislations is not as easy as it looks. It requires changing many social, political and cultural issues. For example to enforce the legislation of inclusive education we need to change how people look at and treat disabled people or people with impairment* (Interviewee, 3, Educational officer)

To sum up, the negative points of the Legislative stage result from the fact that the interviewees believe that the legislations which are available are not compatible with the current situations and the emerging requirements of learning and school building. The interviewees believe that legislations should be flexible and mirror the real world. Legislations that were issued in the past are not flexible and were designed for different ideology, context and goals. However, the interviewees believe that changes in legislations is not easy because it involves social, political and cultural changes.

The discussion of the positive and negative aspects of every stage of the school building process achieves the second and third research objectives:

- 1- *Explore the positive issues in every stage of school building process in Iraq*
- 2- *Explore the negative issues in every stage of school building process in Iraq*

#### 4.3. The interaction between the stakeholders and the Ministry of Education in terms of school building process

This section fulfils the research objective: Evaluate the interaction between the Ministry of Education and its stakeholders with regards to the school building process.

The interaction between the Ministry of Education and the stakeholder interviewees has been characterised with the lack of transparency and openness as well as constructive communication. Interviewee 1 Governor mentioned the rigidity of the administration which was about not being flexible and context-sensitive:

*First is the rigidity which means that the administration suggests policies and procedures and demand strict adherence to them in all circumstances. It is also when the administration does not give individual freedom which usually happens when there is a doubt about the development of employees* Interviewee 1 Governor

Interviewee 1 Governor also added the lack of transparency and the presence of unqualified people made things more complicated and impacted the interaction with the administration:

*Lack of transparency in dealing with finance or timeline may lead to the failure of the project and the loss of resources. Appointing unqualified people will also have its negative consequences as well as not being realistic in terms of deadlines, cost, and quality. And the capacity of implementing the project.*

The lack of transparency makes it difficult to access the project-related files or be aware of what is going on:

*The problem which may face us is that there is no transparency and easy access to all the files and documents. We may think that everything is OK but then we discover that the land is connected with another plan and that it belongs to another department.*

Interviewee 2, Councillor attributed the lack of communication and interaction between the Ministry and stakeholders to the hierarchal pattern of administration where the high-position person on that hierarchy is meant to give orders and be obeyed while the task of the lower-positioned person is to listen and obey without asking or discussing:

*In Iraq, there are a number of limitations for this stage which are related to the nature of hierarchal authority which depends on the person of a higher rank to give orders that should be carried out by the lower-ranked person. A dialogue is not usually established between persons. Also in Iraq working together is not available in the sense that everyone want to work separately to get credit from the higher-ranked persons*

In other words, according to Interviewee 2, Councillor, bureaucracy and the hierarchal relationship are the features of the relationship with the Ministry.

*Again bureaucracy is the basic problem and the hierarchal relationships among members of department and organisation.* Interviewee 2, Councillor

The lack of the team spirit is absent and every stage involves *“many sides and every side works alone without the co-ordination with the other”* Interviewee 2, Councillor

The lack of team spirit was also expressed by Interviewee 3 Educational officer who focused on the importance of the team spirit and the necessity to work as one team:

*That there is no co-ordination between the departments in the sense that everyone does their work independently of the others. There is not sharing in the opinions or perspectives. We all need to draw upon the skills and experience of each other from within the Ministry and the partners and suppliers. We all need to define and justify the need of building new schools and agree and quantify the benefits that will be produced from the project. We need to agree on a defined plan. But as I have mentioned the challenge is that most of us are not used to work in a team.* Interviewee 3 Educational officer

Interviewee 3, Educational officer, *emphasised* collaboration instead of competition. Everyone is competing with others to gain benefits from the higher-rank people:

*We are not used to work as a team and we all have the competitive spirit rather than collaborative one. We all need to prove we are good to those who are ranked higher than us. We do not collaborate because we are afraid that the others steal our success. But this era requires us to behave differently* Interviewee 3 Educational officer

Interviewee 4, Architect also emphasised the idea of transparency and agreed with the other interviewees that transparency is essential and having communication with the administration can make a lot of difference in terms of school building delivery. Transparency enables everyone be aware of the funds, the procedures and every project-related issues:

*Very little transparency can be found between stakeholders and ministries. We need to know about the funding, the difficulties and limitations. Planning to build a school is a so sensitive matter which can be affected by a lot of things if there was no openness or directness. Planning based on non- understandable issues will lead to the failure of the project and the sequence of many disappointments in later stages.* Interviewee 4, Architect

Interviewee 5, Procurement officer is critical of the hierarchal patterns and the too formal relationships between the stakeholders and the Ministry. This hampers any attempt to get the correct information about the project budget and the other issues:

*Sometimes I need to negotiate with people who are ranked higher than me in the hierarchal pattern where formal language and formal relations dominate. Also, getting the right information about the budget and funds is also important because this makes it clear to me to perform in the light of the available budget* Interviewee 5, Procurement officer

The obstacle of the communication between the stakeholders and the Ministry is created by the hierarchal patterns and the bureaucratic mentality that dominate the landscape of school building Interviewee 6, Finance Officer *“We are ruled by a hierarchal patterns and a bureaucratic mentality”* Interviewee 6, Finance Officer.

Interviewee 11, procurement officer, mentioned a problem that is related to distant areas in Iraq which is centralisation which means that people in those distant areas should go through a very long and complicated process to sign a document or a contract in the capital:

*Everything should go through the capital channels and then come back to us which is a waste of time, we do not have a lot of facilities because we do not live in the capital and this a problem. We need the permission from the centre to do anything so the difficulties start from the planning stage.*

To sum up, the interaction between the Ministry of Education and the stakeholders is weak due to the hierarchical nature of administration which imposes a special kind of behaviour where the superiors do not listen to or negotiate with those of the subordinate who have to obey and keep silent. The spirit of team is also lacked and any success in the project is attributed to the individual or people in charge and not to the employees.

#### 4.4. Suggestions and a strategy for improved delivery of school building in Iraq:

This theme reveals the fifth research objective:

*Produce a strategy for improved delivery of school buildings in Iraq*

The final question of the semi-structured interviews was: How can we further improve the school building delivery process at the planning, organizing, implementing and legislative stages? The aim of this question was to ask the interviewees about solutions they think can be effective to overcome the obstacles that face them in all the school-delivery process stages. The tables below reveal the solutions suggested for the interviewees in for all the stages:



**A- What is required for the Planning stage:**

- 1- More appraisal of the site, community, design of building, and exploring whether the building objectives are compatible with these elements
- 2- Being realistic in terms of the budget and the goals
- 3- Applying the principle of monitoring and evaluation and reporting any gap to the management
- 4- It should be taken into account the needs of Iraqi children and parents for a peaceful environment which meets their psychological needs for a shelter and safe place
- 5- A balance should be made between the budget and the growing needs
- 6- Stop blaming each other and head for action
- 7- A list of priorities should be created when building a school in Iraq
- 8- Building schools in Iraq should take into consideration the current situation of Iraq in terms of management, skills, funds and experience
- 9- Transparency and openness
- 10- Creating the culture of dialogue and communication with all stakeholders and the management
- 11- Avoiding the culture of completion and replacing it with the culture of co-operation
- 12- Realistic approach is needed at this stage when planning finance for a school building
- 13- To have a contingency plan in place would be appropriate to overcome any hurdles that may appear such as time delays or financing problems
- 14- Creating the culture of group work is needed.
- 15- Decentralisation is an important issue more flexibility and avoiding bureaucracy (See Table 4.1)

Table 4.2, Suggestions for Planning Stage

Interviewees	Suggestions for Planning Stage
Interviewee 1 Governor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <i>More analysis and evaluation of every element of the projects</i></li><li>- <i>More appraisal of the site, environment, local community and the design of the building and finding whether the objectives of the building projects are compatible with these elements</i></li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Being realistic</i></li> <li>- <i>Adopting the principle of monitoring, evaluating and reporting to those in charge</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 2, Councillor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Meeting the children's needs for a friendly and peaceful environment which provides the suitable atmosphere for them to achieve high standards of learning</i></li> <li>- <i>Planning stage should be Iraq-related by all means</i></li> <li>- <i>Every feature of this era should be counted such as the funding situation, the state of schools in the post-conflict Iraq, people psychological need to find a shelter and a source of hope after years of devastation</i></li> <li>-</li> </ul>
Interviewee 3 Educational officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Need to look at the Iraqi school landscape and make a list of priorities</i></li> <li>- <i>Have to build our schools according to the pattern of the current situations</i></li> <li>- <i>Should stop blaming each other and start looking ahead.</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 4, Architect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Transparency and openness as well as being realistic are all important</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 5, Procurement officer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Transparency and dialogue are essential</i></li> <li>- <i>Creating the culture of co-operation is also essential</i></li> <li>- <i>The culture of competition does not lead to positive consequences.</i></li> <li>- <i>Monitoring and assessment are key elements which enable us to learn from our mistakes.</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 6, Finance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Need to recognise what are the most essential things we need to include</i></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Need to be realistic. We cannot compare ourselves with the school building projects in the West.</i></li> <li>- <i>Wish to establish similar schools to theirs but reality does not allow us. Realistic approach is needed at this stage when planning finance for a school building.</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 7, Director General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Regular monitoring of all aspects of the plan and to keep all parties involved updated in all aspects of the varying stages.</i></li> <li>- <i>To have a contingency plan in place would be appropriate to overcome any hurdles that may appear such as time delays or financing problems.</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 8, Architect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Ideally, an architect should be left alone to plan with cooperation with other sides which should be involved in planning. But the thing is that a lot of sides become involved to participate in the planning stage because they think they know better and they want to save money and complete the project promptly. Cooperation is a key word.</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee, 9 , Engineer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Encouraging communication among stakeholders is essential</i></li> <li>- <i>Creating the culture of group work is needed.</i></li> <li>- <i>Need and everyone needs to understand that success comes from team work.</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 10, planning officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Effective communication with all the sides</i></li> <li>- <i>Improving the skills of listening to others and facing the gaps and work openly to fill them.</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 11, procurement officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Decentralisation is an important issue and we need to be more flexible and avoid bureaucracy</i></li> </ul>

Interviewee 12, Finance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Need to be open with each other in the school building project and acknowledge that the situation requires determination and working hard</i></li> <li>- <i>Negotiating with stakeholders is useful for creating ideas about to achieve the project within the given circumstances</i></li> <li>- <i>Everyone can contribute with their own knowledge and experience.</i></li> </ul>
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**A- What is required for the Organising stage:**

- 1- Transparency is essential in assigning the roles to each member of the team
- 2- The team manager should be fully aware of the capacity of each member of the team and assign the work to them depending on their proven experience and skills
- 3- Communicating with the team members by the team managers in a direct open and clear way
- 4- Stop blaming each other and start to think about the benefits building new schools
- 5- Encouraging people to work and think positively.
- 6- Encouraging the staff to work harder and connecting the success of the project with the hard working employees and rewarding them
- 7- Monitoring is also needed and ministries should appoint a person who really monitors the progress and the needs of school building projects
- 8- Encouraging dialogue and communication among the stakeholders and between the management and employees
- 9- Setting clear agenda for everybody and not considering that these agendas are personal
- 10- Strengthening the connection of the net and also specifying a department in every ministry that deals with the affairs of the distant cities and areas
- 11- Allocating special funds and budgets for organising tasks and duties and assistants for this stage.
- 12- Reporting to the administration about any gap or error can help save a lot of time, effort and money.

Table 4.3, Suggestions for Organising Stage

Interviewees	Suggestions for Organising Stage
Interviewee 1 Governor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Transparency is essential in assigning the roles to each member of the team</i></li> <li>- <i>The team manager should be fully aware of the capacity of each member of the team and assign the work to them depending on their proven experience and skills</i></li> <li>- <i>Communicating with the team members by the team managers in a direct open and clear way</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 2, Councillor	
Interviewee 3 Educational officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>The need to stop blaming each other and start to think about the benefits building new schools will produce to the country and to the children and society.</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 4, Architect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Encouraging people to work and think positively.</i></li> <li>- <i>Everyone has a role to do in the building of a school project.</i></li> <li>- <i>Dialogue is also important to assign the people their roles and the directions that ensure the success of the project.</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 5, Procurement officer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Adopting a way that increases the efficiency and effectiveness of the organising stage by encouraging the staff to work harder and connecting the success of the project with the hard working employees</i></li> <li>- <i>All deals and purchases should meet the systems and the needs of the project</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 6, Finance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Transparency is essential</i></li> <li>- <i>Monitoring is also needed ministries should appoint a person who really monitor the progress and the needs of school building</i></li> </ul>

	<p><i>projects</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Appointing skilled and experience in finance people also will push the process of building forwards.</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 7, Director General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Improving upon the school building delivery process at the organisation stage comes down to excellent communication between management, workers and all the other departments involved and of course transparency.</i></li> <li>- <i>This can highlight any problems early and give people involved the opportunity to rectify them as soon as possible.</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 8, Architect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Encouraging communication and dialogue among the members of the project</i></li> <li>- <i>Creating a group spirit in the work which makes all persons work as a group.</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee, 9 , Engineer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Setting clear agenda for everybody and not considering that these agendas are personal</i></li> <li>- <i>These agendas should be seen as a formal assignment of work given to everyone.</i></li> <li>- <i>Any difference in attitudes or points of view should be reported formally to the manager or the engineer and discussed in a formal way.</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 10, planning officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Asking the appropriate person to do the appropriate thing</i></li> <li>- <i>Trying to negotiate with others and listening to their perspectives and points of view.</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 11, procurement officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Strengthening the connection of the net and also specifying a department in every ministry that deals with the affairs of the distant cities and areas.</i></li> <li>- <i>Allocating special funds and budgets for</i></li> </ul>

	<i>organising tasks and duties and assistants for this stage.</i>
Interviewee 12, Finance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Transparency and decentralisation are a must for the success of the organising stage</i></li> <li>- <i>Appointing skilled and knowledgeable people in the financial department is essential</i></li> <li>- <i>Reporting to the administration about any gap or error can help save a lot of time, effort and money.</i></li> </ul>

**B- What is required for the Implementing stage:**

- 1- The coordination guidelines and management strategies should be clear and well-defined
- 2- Delivering a work plan which indicates the objectives, the expected results, and the activities that should be developed as well as the budget available and timeframe specified
- 3- Every activity should be assigned to a specified individual or organisation that should have similar experience and the capacity to achieve the targets
- 4- Encouraging dialogue, transparency and openness to the other and more communication whose primary goal is to collaborate not compete.
- 5- Stop blaming each other
- 6- Looking back at the past and reading about other nation's successful stories in rebuilding their countries we will have the determination
- 7- Dealing with trustworthy and reliable suppliers and organisation is a must also.
- 8- Having a well -defined plan
- 9- There should also be a well-defined time frame and the capacity to achieve the targets set out in the plan.
- 10- Encouraging the culture of team work
- 11- Authoritarian figures should be avoided at work in order to guarantee a more successful work
- 12- Attempting to take all the circumstances into account from the very beginning and encouraging everyone to express their views from the beginning or early stage.

- 13- Dealing with people who are skilled and experienced and who know how to deal with unpredicted things and adjust the budget and the whole process to contain these unexpected things
- 14- Making sure that plans and permissions as well as obligations and conditions are all done according to the suitable standards and regulations.

Table 4.4, Suggestions for Implementing Stage

Interviewees	Suggestions for Implementing Stage
Interviewee 1 Governor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>The coordination guidelines and management strategies should be clear and well- defined</i></li> <li>- <i>Delivering a work plan which indicates the objectives, the expected results, and the activities that should be developed as well as the budget available and timeframe specified</i></li> <li>- <i>Every activity should be assigned to a specified individual or organisation that should have similar experience and the capacity to achieve the targets.</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 2, Councillor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Dialogue and communication and transparency are essential in dealing with sensitive issues such as funding</i></li> <li>- <i>Stop blaming each other</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 3 Educational officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Transparency, openness to the other and more communication whose primary goal is to collaborate not compete.</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 4, Architect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Transparency and the loyalty to build a new Iraq are the key ingredients for success.</i></li> <li>- <i>Building schools should create hope of the future and of the ability to restart again</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 5, Procurement officer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Looking back at the past and reading about other nation's successful stories in rebuilding their countries we will have the determination</i></li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>I attempt to set a good example to everyone involved in the project</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 6, Finance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Planning is valid in improving the implementing stage</i></li> <li>- <i>Dealing with skilled and experienced people is a must.</i></li> <li>- <i>Dealing with trustworthy and reliable suppliers and organisation is a must also.</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 7, Director General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>We can further improve the implementing stage of the school building delivery process by having a well-defined plan</i></li> <li>- <i>The plan should contain clear and concise information with both clear aims and objectives</i></li> <li>- <i>There should also be a well-defined time frame and the capacity to achieve the targets set out in the plan.</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 8, Architect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Spreading the culture of team work and how to share responsibility for the project and its success and failure</i></li> <li>- <i>Authoritarian figures should be avoided at work in order to guarantee a more successful work</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 9 , Engineer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Team work and making sure that everything has been settled in the planning stage</i></li> <li>- <i>Attempting to take all the circumstances into account from the very beginning and encouraging everyone to express their views from the beginning or early stage.</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 10, planning officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Making sure that plans and permissions as well as obligations and conditions are all done according to the suitable standards and regulations.</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 11, procurement officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Trying to do our best in the planning and organising stages to avoid disappointment at the implementing stage</i></li> </ul>

	- <i>We need to put extra effort in these two stages because implementing stage is based on them.</i>
Interviewee 12, Finance Officer	- <i>Dealing with people who are skilled and experienced and who know how to deal with unpredicted things and adjust the budget and the whole process to contain these unexpected things</i>

**C- What required for the Legislative stage is:**

- 1- Encouraging transparency and organised files and documents
- 2- Cultivating the culture of accepting different opinion
- 3- Appointing a person who is skilled and experienced in the legislations of school building
- 4- Changing people's perspectives about a legislation and helping them to think of legislations as support to them and not a thing to be scared of
- 5- Adopting the principle of value of money
- 6- Typical investment of time and money
- 7- A specialised barrister should be appointed and consulted for every part in the project
- 8- Legislations should be flexible and derived from the real context
- 9- Establishing legislations for the new Iraq which is expected to be democratic and for everyone.
- 10- The new legislations must be compatible with the new circumstances and the new understanding of the role of people, schools, laws and projects.
- 11- Greater attention should be paid to the distant areas in Iraq. Special legislations should be established for these areas. These legislations should be flexible and context-related.

Table 4.5, Suggestions for Legislative Stage

Interviewees	Suggestions for Legislative Stage
Interviewee 1 Governor	- <i>More transparency and creating organised files and documents</i>

Interviewee 2, Councillor	- <i>Some flexible legislations are required in order to cope with the current situation</i>
Interviewee 3 Educational officer	- <i>Really need to change how we think and treat others. An approach of accepting the other is essential and it encourages success at all levels.</i>
Interviewee 4, Architect	- <i>Appointing a person who is skilled and experienced in the legislations of school building is very helpful</i>
Interviewee 5, Procurement officer.	- <i>The need to convince people that laws and legislations are there to protect people</i> - <i>What we need is laws that cover every aspect of our life.</i>
Interviewee 6, Finance Officer	- <i>Adopting the rule of value of money in the sense that we need to find the opportunities where we can balance low prices with effectiveness and efficiency</i> - <i>For this reason we need to recruit experts who guide us towards saving time and money and not affecting quality</i> - <i>Need a typical investment of time and money.</i>
Interviewee 7, Director General	
Interviewee 8, Architect	- <i>Need to be aware of the legislations and carry out all of them.</i> - <i>A specialised barrister should be appointed and consulted for every hint in the project. It can be paying more money but it is also about the safety of hundreds of children and teachers</i>
Interviewee, 9 , Engineer	- <i>Should approach legislations as flexible issues especially these difficult days</i> - <i>Legislations should be coming from the context and reality so we might need to modify some legislations about school building and other basic services to cope with the demands of the post-</i>

	<i>conflict era in Iraq where the squeeze on capital funding is present everywhere.</i>
Interviewee 10, planning officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Establishing legislations for the new Iraq</i></li> <li>- <i>Setting regulations which meet the needs of the democratic society which we are aspiring for.</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 11, procurement officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>People need to feel that they had a difficult time but now they have started to see a light at the end of the tunnel. The new legislations must be compatible with the new circumstances and the new understanding of the role of people, schools, laws and projects.</i></li> </ul>
Interviewee 12, Finance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Distant cities and areas should be paid extra attention in terms of budget, funds, legislation</i></li> <li>- <i>School building should be encouraged in these areas and more flexible legislations and circumstances should be provided.</i></li> <li>- <i>The policy of decentralisation is also a must because it save a lot of time and effort and money.</i></li> </ul>

A strategy for school building can be concluded from the above data analysis. The shared elements that have been suggested by the interviewees to be provided in all the stages of school building delivery are: transparency, communication, dialogue and openness and cultivating the culture of cooperation and avoiding competition. The other shared element that should be strongly present is appointing skilled and experience people who can react promptly in cases of emergency.

- The new strategy for school building delivery should also be based on transparency and monitoring and reporting any errors or gaps to the management
- The new strategy should be realistic and based on the unique needs of post-conflict Iraq
- The new strategy should encourage team or group work among all the stakeholders
- The new strategy should balance between the needs and the available funds; that is why skilled and experienced people should be employed for all stages

#### 4.5. Lessons learned from international context about building schools in the post-conflict countries

The participants were aware of the experiences of other post-conflict countries in terms of school building delivery process from two perspectives. The first one is that the Western countries take into account all the child's needs for sport, music, healthy environment, libraries and laboratories as well as they consider the size and the furniture of the classrooms and other rooms. Interviewee 4, Architect, mentioned that building schools should be done according to standards adopted by Western countries because they use the healthy style and the style that reflects inclusive learning and comfort for both teachers and children:

*Western style schools are very comfortable and they allow children to learn more and cognitively develop. Room size, room furniture, room lightening, room heating and air conditioning, plants outside the classroom, music halls, sport halls, hygienic toilets and sinks, and using appropriate colours.* Interviewee 4, Architect

Interviewee 3 Educational officer, emphasised that Iraqi people should learn a lesson from the Western style schools in that they should design schools in a way that meet the needs of children at all ages and the cultural and social expectations of a school. For example, in a school there should always what reflects the school involvement in the cultural, social and religious occasions for all the students from different races and sectors:

*A good lesson to be learned from Western style schools is that the building and furniture reflect the social and cultural events of all the sectors that exist in a society. In Iraq there are many different racial backgrounds and many religious sectors. An Iraqi school should include in its furniture and decoration all these events and reflect the spectrum of religions and cultures.* Interviewee 3 Educational officer

The other lesson that has been learned from the Western style of building schools is involving the parents and community in the school building delivery process in post-conflict Iraq. This gives advantages to the school building delivery process in the sense that it strengthens the community-school rapport, makes parents care more about the school and makes the building meet the community cultural and social needs:

*In the West, parents and community are stakeholders. I think this is a good step because parents know what the children need and want. There should be a link between schools and the communities they are located in. School building can be centred for adult learning and a*

*place where social and cultural events can take place. These points have not considered in Iraq Interviewee 1 Governor*

However, the most important lessons that have been learned from international experiences of post-conflict countries is their determination to educate the students even if the physical building of a school is not available. Kosovo, Rwanda, Uganda and other post-conflict countries were striving to make the students learn and get the appropriate education even in tents in camps. Education was given priority over everything because these countries believed that education is the access to all kinds of development and growth. Interviewee, 9, Engineer emphasised the idea by mentioning that some post-conflict countries started with education even before that they were politically settled:

*Some countries fought to start the education reform before they were really politically settles. They started the educational process when the children and parents were still in encampment. The UN helped them by sending books and pens and also sending teachers.* Interviewee, 9, Engineer.

#### 4.6. Summary

This chapter discussed the interview data analysis and the themes that have been yielded from the qualitative data analysis. The data analysis has yielded two main themes: the challenges of every stage in the process of school building and how these challenges are impacted by the Iraqi context, and the strengths and challenges of every stage and how they influence the process of school building. The main challenges in the stages are categorised into two basic groups. The first group of challenges refer to the financial challenges and the limited funds and budget. Financial hardship seems to affect all the stages especially the Planning and Implementing stages. The limited funds or even the cancelled funds force stakeholders in the school building project to modify the plans, purchases and implementing the plan to be compatible with the allocated funds. The second group of challenges are linked with the structure of the Iraqi society and the traditions and values that are prevailing. The Iraqi society is a society that is ruled by hierarchal patterns of authority, bureaucracy, Collectivist culture and favouritism. Loyalty is devoted to the tribe rather than to the public interest. Different attitudes are deemed as rivals, and there is no chance to accept different opinions. People compete with each other to gain the satisfaction of and to please those in the higher position of the hierarchy; the matter which makes team work a difficult matter to achieve. Everyone works for their personal gains and not for the team.

The Legislative stage also has challenges related to the situation in Iraq. The interview data demonstrated that the interviewees call for a change in the legislations in order to be compatible with the current situation on the one hand and the emerging requirements for school building and teaching on the other hand. However, there is awareness that the change in legislation is not easy because it requires changes at the political, cultural and social levels. The new legislations, according to data, should be flexible and appropriate to the new era of democratic transformation and rebuilding a new Iraq. Legislations should also be context sensitive in the sense that they should consider every context individually and not impose the same laws on all the contexts.

The lack of transparency is also a main obstacle. This lack of transparency is manifested in all stages in the sense that there are difficulties in obtaining information about funds, budgets, and other information, there are difficulties in communicating with other parties especially if they are in a higher position on the hierarchy. People cannot accept the perspectives of other people if they are different from theirs. The other problem which also impacts the development of projects in the distant areas is centralisation which necessitates that everything should be agreed by and accepted by the central authority in the capital.

There are lessons learned from experiences of post-conflict countries as far as school building delivery process is concerned. The most important three lessons are that: First, schools should reflect the children's needs in the design and furniture. Schools should always reflect the events, social and cultural, of the community outside the school and its design should also mirror the social and cultural spectrum of the Iraqi society.

Second, in a post-conflict time, education should be given priority over all other elements because it is the key to development and recovery from the traumatic time of conflict. Third, the involvement of the community and parents is essential because they can be end users of the school and they know what they and their children need.

## Chapter 5

### Data Interpretation

#### 5.1. Introduction

In this chapter data that have been collated and analysed in the previous chapter will be interpreted. This will be done through linking the data with the studies reviewed in Chapter two, Literature Review, and the extent to which the data collected are compatible with these studies. Moreover, the chapter will find out the degree to which the data collected and analysed answer the research questions, and how far they achieve the research aim and objectives.

#### 5.2. A review of the study

Data were transcribed and translated and thematically analysed. Thematic analysis has yielded a number of themes. These themes are:

Challenges of every stage of the school building process:

Challenges of the Planning stage:

Challenges of the Organising stage:

Challenges of the Implementing stage:

Challenges of the Legislative stage:

Strengths and Challenges of every stage of the school building process:

The strengths of the Planning stage

The challenges of the Planning stage

The strengths of the Organising stage

The challenges of the Organising stage

The strengths of the Implementing stage

The challenges of the Implementing stage

The strengths of the Legislative stage

The challenges of the Legislative stage



The interaction between the stakeholders and the Ministry of Education in terms of school building process

The good practice and lessons learnt from international contexts that have improved the delivery of schools

Solutions and a strategy for improved delivery of school building in Iraq:

### 5.3. Challenges of the Planning stage:

The challenges that the Planning stage faces in post-conflict Iraq are related to the fact that Iraq has experienced a loss of schools, experienced people who either killed or escaped the country, infrastructure, employment, funding, resources and school buildings. The most influencing loss is the loss of security and safety. Too many children are without education and schools are crowded. There is a real desire to build schools according to the international standards but reality drives people who are in charge of school building to make a list of priorities. The priority in Iraq at the moment is to build schools that contain the children and the teenagers and protect them from being members of a gang or military militia. Girls should also be protected from being victims of sexual abuse or kidnapped.

The conflict has created a society where fear, uncertainty and unsafety prevail. For all these reasons, schools in this pre-conflict era are thought to be more than an educational centre; they are deemed to be the first step in peace building. Iraq is witnessing an era where everything should be built including the physical and political foundation and infrastructure of the country (Dupuy & Peters, 2010). The most important step is enabling the devastated generations to resume their pre-conflict life and survive the impact of war. Education is one of the factors that accelerate building healthy generations and security (Dupuy & Peters, 2010). O'Donoghue & Clarke (2013) have identified education to play vital roles in the post-conflict era of a country that has witnessed prolonged conflicts and wars. These roles can be summarised as that: protecting children from violence, harassment and exploitation in the post-conflict stage that can also be full of dangers, giving children hope to return to stability and encouraging them to develop social skills and passing the traumatic war time. Education can support a war-torn society to restore its normalcy and enhance tolerance among divided communities; the matter which encourages the process of peace building. Education can also encourage democracy by building active citizens and strong societies which are built through literacy and knowledge. So, the first step towards building a new Iraqi society that adopts democracy can be achieved through education i.e. building proper schools.

So, a great responsibility is attached to education in post-conflict Iraq and to the policy makers. However, these expectations are faced with the real world difficulties. The most prominent obstacle that hinders planning for re-building schools is the financial and economic situation whose effect is displayed in the lack of funding, resources and starting school building and not completing them. Nkengbeza (2014) describes the economic situation in a post-conflict country, including Iraq, as that the level of investment is very low because people are not secured and certain because of the economic instability that has resulted from the long years of conflict and increasing criminality and corruption. The drain of food supply has led to hunger and starvation, destruction of environment and infrastructure; government services and facilities are degraded and police effectiveness has diminished because the budget has been directed to military actions.

The challenge in the planning stage is that there is a will by some policy makers to establish schools which are intended to be educational centres, but the huge numbers of children that are waiting outside the schools and the crowded classrooms and the two-shift school days all make schools function as a shelter that protects children from violence and exploitation first and then educates them. The dilemma that the policy makers and architects face in the Planning stage is that they need to meet the standards of building schools that enhance students' achievement and re-build the generation emotionally and physically as well as psychologically (UNESCO, 2011; Ahrari, Zaremohazzabehi, & Othman, 2016), but they have also to take the real world into account which demonstrates financial and economic difficulties. It is true that building a school is about meeting the human needs and facilitating comfortable and easy as well as healthy environment to the children (Dudek, 2014), but there is a prioritised need which is concerned with safety and security providing the first step in re-building the generations.

The other obstacle that challenges the Planning stage in the school building delivery in post-conflict Iraq is the absence of transparency. All departments are dominated by bureaucracy and favouritism as well as lack of dialogue. This point will be discussed in more detail later in the discussion of the challenges of every stage.

#### 5.4. Challenges of the Organising stage

The interviewees mentioned a number of challenges that prevented a proper Organising stage. The challenges that face the policy makers and stakeholders in the Organising stage

can be divided into two groups. The first group of challenges are related to the fact that Organising stage is concerned with appointing certain persons specific jobs to take part in the process of school building. The difficulties spring from the fact that qualifications, skills and experience as well as knowledge and academic degree are not the only criteria that determine who will be appointed and hired. It is favouritism and corruption that have been developed during the war because everything went unchecked. People are appointed for jobs because they are related to a tribal or religious leader or because they are related to someone who has religious or political authority. IDDRS (2006) argues that corruption increases as a result of prolonged armed conflicts because the ability of the government to control society and economy deteriorates and the authority of the police declines. DESA (2007) defines corruption as exercising public power for personal gains through 'petty and grand forms of corruption or state capture by elite and private interests' (p.14). The political institutions are too vulnerable to support the development of a participatory and reformist political system (Practical Action, 2005). Efforts by the government to restore the social and political well-being are hampered by the challenges that a post-conflict environment produces such as competition for power for personal interests and not for using it for the public interests (Practical Action, 2005). Indeed, the semi-structured interviews data demonstrated that the interviewees believed that appointing people for a job took place not according to their capacity and skills and qualifications, but in accordance with the authority of their tribe or a person they were related to (Interviewee 7, Director General; Interviewee 8, Architect). Communicating with people who have been appointed because of their relations with authoritarian figures or tribes leader becomes difficult because they use the voice of the authoritarian figure who has supported them. Moreover, such people as these do not carry out orders or instruction because they believe that they are at a high position where they give orders and not receive them. The Organising stage is concerned with assigning people in the project their roles and duties. The fact that some people are hired according to specific connections with leaders or authoritarian figures makes this stage difficult to be implemented properly.

The second group of challenges in the Organising stages can be reduced to the nature and culture of the Iraqi society. According to Steele (2008), the most significant roles are played by the faith tradition and tribe costumes which shape the Iraqi identity and culture. There are a set of values which are related to hierarchy, group welfare, respect for authority, as well as saving face as opposed to innovation, respect for law, equality and individualism (Steele,

2008). The ultimate goal of an individual in such a society as this is that their community acknowledges their honour. Individuals are interested in satisfying their tribe or group rather than satisfying the laws and regulations (Steele, 2008). Iraq is dominated by Collectivist culture where the loyalty is to the values of the group even if they contradict with the individual's sets of values. As McMullan (2015) states, the division of individualism-collectivism affects communication among members of society. Members of collectivist culture do not tolerate differences in opinions or disagreement, and they consider any person with a different opinion as hostility, while members of individualist culture defend their opinions and use justification. They tolerate differences in opinions and disagreement. Interviewee 3 Educational officer and Interviewee 4, Architect discussed that there was a great need to learn the culture of dialogue and accepting the other opinions. There is always a breakdown in communication because in a collectivist culture like Iraq's, everyone is adherent to their points of view and they consider any disagreement as an attack on them and their group and the values they represent.

So, the Organising stage of school building delivery in post-conflict Iraq is disturbed by the nature of the culture of the Iraqi society. The negative features of the collectivist culture have been developed and become more prominent after the conflict. People have become more strict and adherent to their groups and its values because they find in them security and safety and the ability to survive in an existence- threatening conflict (Smith *et al.*, 2014).

### 5.5. Challenges of the Implementing stage

The data demonstrated that the real challenge in the Implementing stage was delivering the school building before the deadlines. The other challenge was, as data demonstrated, that any weakness in the Planning and Organising stages would be reflected in the Implementing stage (Interviewee 6, Finance Officer; Interviewee 7, Director General; and Interviewee 8, Architect). These challenges of facing unexpected challenges and gaps in the previous stages necessitate that a culture of self-assessment and monitoring should be present at all stages in order to prevent these problems (Bonner *et al.*, 2011). However, self-assessment and monitoring are not adopted in a collectivist society such as the Iraqi society. There are issues related to Iraq collectivist culture and which shape and direct its members' behaviour and attitudes. Kaur & Noman (2015) suggest the dimensions of every culture. The first dimension of culture is the power distance which represents how far a society and its members accept the inequality and the distribution of power. In a collectivist culture such as the Iraqi one,

hierarchal patterns and relations are dominant and people have the tendency to accept that authority is represented by a person who controls others and is placed at the top of the hierarchy. This authoritarian person is obeyed, and everyone is competing with the others to satisfy them. In this case, people endeavour to please the person at the top of the hierarchy without paying attention to public interests. This point affects communication among people, appointing people and how people behave and how people treat and communicate with each other. This point also affects how people react to reporting an error or a weakness. They will consider that reporting errors and gaps may threaten their job and expose them to criticism and punishment. People who are at the lower step of the hierarchy cannot criticise or disagree; they have to obey (Yoon, 2010). So monitoring and self-assessment cannot be undertaken because of the hierarchal relationships and patterns that rule the Iraqi society. In the collectivist culture people work to meet to satisfy their bosses and those who are superior in the hierarchal administrative patterns. Iraqi society is built and established by related individuals who prioritise group's values and behave according to group's norms in communal forms (Annekinda & Rahmani (2015).

This makes the Implementing stage a very challenging stage because of the culture dominant and the collectivist values that shape people's behaviour and attitudes. The interviewees mentioned the financial factor as one of the other challenges that prevented a proper Implementing stage. As discussed above, the financial turbulent situation can be reduced to the difficulties that a post-conflict country faces after a long time of wars and conflicts. However, the culture of the country that was torn by wars can to a large extent affect the financial situation. For example, the absence of self-assessment and monitoring makes it difficult to know how and where the money goes. Jamil *et al.* (2016) confirm the relationship between the financial situations and the culture dominant in a society. In a collectivist culture, according to Jamil *et al.* (2016), management is morally or immorally based and the groups management. It is the personal relationships that dominate everything. The hierarchal structure is also salient and it penetrates bureaucracy and the country political system (Jamil *et al.*, 2016). There is an avoidance of any change or reform that leads to transforming their secure and well-known environments. For this reason, financial matters are controlled by a group that is related to the authority figures and they control the flow of money and how it is spent.

## 5.6. Challenges of the Legislative stage:

According to the analysed data, the most challenging issue in the Legislative stage is that the regulations and the laws are not compatible with the requirements of the recent era and the goals and aims of people in post-conflict Iraq. The interviewees believed that these legislations and rules were designed for a different goal and different context to the one that is present in Iraq. These regulations and rules should change as everything has changed (Interviewee 3 Educational officer, Interviewee 4, Architect, Project 2, Interviewee 8, Architect, Interviewee 10, planning officer, Interviewee 11, procurement officer, and Interviewee 12, Finance Officer). In the past, schools were built as centres to reflect the authority and the dominance of one party over another. So, legislations were established to serve this goal. However, school at present are being built to represent democracy, hope, a new start, religious and political tolerance; which requires different rules and legislations to cope with the requirements of the new era. This discussion is consistent with Knapp (2007) who makes a distinction between two types of school building: authoritarian building and democratic building. The authoritarian type is dominant in the undemocratic societies, and they do not allow freedom and self-actualisation. They are not based on tolerating other points of view and opinions. Democratic buildings are people-oriented and they are tolerant and open and based on human scale. They also encourage the development of open society and of individuals (Knapp, 2007).

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Legislative stage is so essential not only because it is for the benefit of society and its members to enforce law but also because, as Vapnek *et al.* (2016) puts it, the dominance of law and development are interrelated and they reinforce each other. The enforcement of law is also crucial for sustained development, the realisation of human rights and freedom, and eradication of poverty and economic growth. It protects the poor and vulnerable against any violation of their rights. Moreover, the legitimacy of government depends largely on the administration of laws. Therefore, enforcing laws and regulations that meet the needs of the current era and the requirements of people to be protected by human rights, is essential. Enforcing regulations means the government is active and present. However, the values that were dominant during the conflict and in the pre-conflict era in Iraq were that law was used as a tool to exercise power over the people. It was also used for the benefits of those in the

elite while the majority of people were deprived of justice and using law to restore their rights.

By discussing the challenges of the four stages of the school building delivery process and presenting the difficulties that each stage has, two parts of the two research objectives have been achieved which are: *Evaluate the current status of school building delivery* and *Explore the school building delivery process*. The next part of the two research objectives will be achieved when discussing the strengths and challenges of every stage. The study aims to provide a strategy of building schools in post-conflict Iraq. These schools are expected to initiate the peace building process and give people hope and motive to re-build their country. The four stages that are involved in the school building process have been discussed in terms of the challenges that prevent these stages to be proper ones. The study of these challenges could not have been achieved without examining the Iraqi context at the moment and the extent to which it has been affected by the prolonged armed conflict, and also the culture and sets of values that shape the Iraqi society and its members' behaviour and attitudes. The study of culture is crucial because culture is reflected on the values and attitudes of the members of a society. Culture is also thought to affect the economic, political and social as well as administrative aspects of life, and, therefore, it impacts the process of school building delivery and makes it what it is together with the consequences of the armed conflict. The interaction between the consequences of the prolonged armed conflict and the culture influence on different aspects of life provides a detailed insight about the factors that contribute to the school building process success or failure. The discussion above partially answers the first and second research questions: *What is the current status of school building delivery in Iraq?* *What is the school building delivery process?* The discussion of the strengths and challenges of every stage will also complete the answers to the two questions. The current status of school building and delivery in Iraq is affected to the largest extent with the tragic consequences of the prolonged armed conflict that has torn Iraq. These consequences are demonstrated at the economic, political, social, administrative and educational levels. Data revealed that financial problems, that have resulted from the conflict and wars have hampered the projects of school building and deliveries, have led to that the process of school building delivery has become a complicated and difficult task to be accomplished.

The economic, social, cultural, political and administrative consequences of the conflict have shaped every stage of the school building delivery and created obstacles that prevent the achievement of proper school building delivery stages. The interaction of these consequences with the culture of the Iraqi society has made the matter more complicated as wars and conflict have intensified the negative aspects of the Iraqi culture such as favouritism, hierarchy and some aspects of the collectivist culture which Iraq belongs to.

The discussion of the strengths and challenges of every stage of the school building delivery process will complete achieving the first two research objectives:

- 1- Evaluate the current status of school building delivery in post-conflict Iraq*
- 2- Explore the school building delivery process*

The discussion will also complete the answers to the first two research questions:

*What is the current status of school building delivery in Iraq? What is the school building delivery process?*

### **5.7. The strengths of the Planning stage**

The interviewees were asked about the strengths of the Planning stage. In fact, they were expected to show their understanding of a planning stage and how it should be and then evaluate the situation of the Planning stage in the school building delivery process. This question, additionally, was directed to the interviewees to find out the lesson they had learned from the experience of other Western countries and the countries that had experienced the same circumstances i.e. torn by wars and conflict and then they had to rebuild their infrastructure including schools and the educational system in general.

One of the most important strengths of Planning stage is that it gives hope to people that life will be back and their children will start their life as and where it should normally start. It is the first step back to normalcy (Interviewee 3 Educational officer). This meets what Hawrylenko (2010) claims that education is the key in preventing conflict and also in the reconstruction and reconciliation process as well. Education is essential in building social cohesion and supporting economic recovery. It is also the tool to foster peace. Education and schools help to mitigate the negative consequences of conflict in children and to make people feel optimistic and that life has started to be natural.



Because this stage has an emotional and metaphorical significance, it should start by taking into consideration the urgent needs of the Iraqi society that is torn by war and the catastrophic circumstances. This means planning should be for school buildings that shelter the children and protect them from violence and exploitation. The post-conflict era can be as dangerous as the while-conflict time if not worse. Children and the youths should be protected and educated to be immunised against all the causes that have led to the conflict. At first, the main concern is to plan for a shelter and gradually move towards implementing the international standards of Western countries gradually. The first essential step is to protect the generations from the conflict which can continue till the post-conflict era: the post-conflict period is also dangerous because violence and political instability can persist even after the formal end of the conflict (Langer & Brown, 2016). This is consistent with what Buckland (2005) identifies the role of education as encouraging peace building and settlement. Dupuy & Peters (2010) also argue that education can accelerate the process of peace making. The World Bank (2005) believes that education contributes to peace building. The World Bank (2005) recommends that educational reform should start as early as possible the process of rebuilding, and the focus should be on capacity-building. UNESCO (2011) has also called for an early educational reform and an early integration of education in the process of peace building. Dupuy & Peters (2010) focus on the role of education in restoring the feelings of security that people and the youth in particular need after a long time of wars and conflict which are a real threat of human security. UNESCO (2011) recommends “peace education” in the post-conflict era. “Peace education” supports in mitigating the psychological consequences of the prolonged conflict and enhancing the culture of peace and tolerance. The basic target of “peace education” is the youth who are the most vulnerable group of the Iraqi people negatively affected by the long-term conflict because they are juvenile in a very enthusiastic manner and they are easily abused. Therefore, a great attention should be paid to the Planning stage for what it stands for.

The data demonstrated another role of the Planning stage which is setting plans and achievable objectives. Good planning stage helps in avoiding disappointment at later stages. That necessitates that skilled and experienced people should be appointed at the right places. However, the data show some challenges as far as the Planning stage is concerned. This stage is largely affected by the financial restrictions that are one of the consequences of the long-term conflict (Interviewee 2, Councillor). Interviewee 8, Architect pointed to the contradiction that existed between what an architect thought as appropriate to be included in

the Planning stage and what the financial situation was for the funds of the school building project. It is the contradiction between what should be and what can be achieved. The main concern has been shifted from how ideal a school is in terms of sport halls, laboratories to build a shelter to contain the children and protect them from the dangers of the street in a post-conflict country like Iraq (Interviewee 12, Finance Officer).

Interviewee 4, Architect, Interviewee 5, Procurement officer, and Interviewee 6, Finance Officer all identified another challenges of the Planning stage in the post-conflict Iraqi school building and delivery. It is about the lack of the culture of dialogue where the interviewee expressed their inability to communicate with other people who were involved in the project either on the site or in ministries. There is no transparency in the way these people deal with each other and it is difficult to obtain reliable information regarding the budget, the payments or anything that is related to the project. This is one of the consequences of the prolonged conflict from the one side, and the Iraqi culture from the other side. This agrees with what the World Bank (2006) has demonstrated that almost all post-conflict countries have demonstrated weak performance in the effectiveness of the government and control of corruption. Government effectiveness is also measured by the extent to which law is enforced in the country away from any other affecting factors. It is also measured by how far people feel secure with the police and the courts and how far rules and laws are enforced. The other criterion for measuring the government effectiveness is the extent to which the citizens are enabled to express themselves freely and have free associations and free media. Controlling corruption is another indicator of the government's effectiveness. Corruption means exercising public power for personal gains through 'petty and grand forms of corruption or state capture by elite and private interests' (DESA, 2007). In the post-conflict countries the political institutions are too vulnerable to afford for the development reformist political system (Practical Action, 2005). The government's efforts to restore the social and political normal life are hampered by the post-conflict challenges such as competition for power for personal interests and not for using it for the public interests. The other challenges are that political leaders have limited legitimacy, an extremely high level of polarisation, and lack of consensus on the way the country should follow to encounter the challenges and overcome them (Practical Action, 2005). All these challenges have affected the stage of Planning, and in fact, all the school building process.

The culture of the Iraqi society also plays a role in creating obstacles and deepening the post-conflict challenges. Studies have found that Iraq is classified as a collectivist culture. One of

the prominent features of this culture is the hierarchal pattern that dominates all aspects of social and political life. Power is controlled by a certain person who is situated at the top of the hierarch and who has the authority to give orders and instructions without being discussed by the other members who are sub-ordinate and situated at the lower steps of the hierarch. The subordinate, in this case, do not pay attention to the public interest or what society needs; they rather endeavour to satisfy the main person and obey them without disagreement. According to Kaur & Noman 2015; Jamil *et al.*, 2016, Iraq is a high power distance country which accepts differences and inequalities in power in the country. In countries such as Iraq there is a considerable emotional distance between the superior and subordinate. The subordinate always obey the superior and carry out the orders issued by them and they never contradict the orders or the will of subordinate. The subordinate have to always accept the superior's point of view because they can never discuss their own views in front of them; and this is an important feature of the collectivist culture. Hence, the challenges of the stage of Planning spring from both the negative outcomes of the long-term conflict and the features of the Iraqi culture. The conflict has indeed has intensified the aspects that the collectivist culture has such as corruption and the hierarchal system which is a threat of creation and innovation (Jamil *et al.*, 2016).

According to Bonner *et al.* (2011), the main obstacles that may hinder the process of delivery should be discussed through a dialogue between all the parties to reach a mutual vision and understanding about relevant issues. However, this seems difficult in the given circumstances where the culture of dialogue has not been cultivated in a proper way.

#### 5.8. The strengths of the Organising stage

In this stage jobs are assigned people to perform them and everyone is supposed to know their job and what to do (Interviewee 2, Councillor). The word “understanding” is repeated many times in the data of (Interviewee 3 Educational officer) to indicate that everyone who is related to the project of school building project should understand what should be done. The word “roles” is also repeated in the data of (Interviewee 4, Architect) to express the function of the Organising stage and what happens there. The participants' data demonstrated that the right people should be in the right place. (Interviewee 4, Architect) emphasised the necessity of appointing the right people in the right place on the project. This stage, according to data, is characterised by choosing the right people for the right places; these terms were repeated as features of the Organising stage. Money is organised and specific people are allocated to deal

with financial issues, and so are sales, planning, deliveries and materials. Ideally, every job should be appointed to the right person and by *right person* it is meant the skilled and well-experienced as well as knowledgeable person that can deal with the issues in a professional way.

### 5.9. The challenges of the Organising stage

The challenges of this stage are related to the financial hardship that Iraq is experiencing in the post-conflict era, the cultural characteristics of the Iraqi society as well as the political, social and administrative circumstances that have deepened the negative aspects of the culture.

Interviewee 12, Finance Officer mentioned the difficulties that Iraq was facing because of the lack of certainty in all aspects of life especially the financial one “*Budgets can change or stop so we have to always be ready for alternatives*”. The financial situation can affect the number of people who will be appointed, their experience and qualifications. Sometimes, a person can do many jobs at the same time most of which they are not experienced at. Bonner et al. (2011) describe the stage of Organising as the stage of preparing the programme. They point out that in this stage, efforts continue to be made to raise awareness of the programme and work in a coordinate fashion. The infrastructure management should be strengthened within the Ministry of Education. Financial management and procurement need to be developed. At this stage, the development of capacity building materials takes place (Bonner et al., 2011).

In addition to the financial difficulties which prevent implementing a proper Organising stage, there are the factors that are related to the culture of the Iraqi society. Iraq is classified to have a collectivist culture. To belong to a collectivist culture means having the hierarchal relationships and patterns in employment, education, family and administration. It is featured with the intolerance of different opinions and considering people who express different opinions or disagreement as enemies. Strict adherence to the values of the group makes it difficult for the collective culture members to accept any other values or to discuss the possibility of this with others. It is also difficult to take orders from other people except those who belong to the same group and are superior at the hierarchal pyramid: “*Weakness can be that unqualified people are not capable of working/managing the positions that they are in. This causes difficulties as their incompetency is destructive in the case of the time line, cost and the morale of the work force* (Interviewee 7, Director General).

Ulaywi & Khairi (2013) also state that in the collectivist culture the members of this culture endeavour to satisfy the superior and please them rather than carrying out the orders and the instructions that lead to the benefit of the firm or organisation.

This makes it difficult to implement a proper Organising stage because of two reasons. Firstly, people in this collective-culture dominated societies are not chosen for their jobs on the basis of their qualifications, skills or experience. Rather, the principle of favouritism is prevailing and, as Jamil *et al.* (2016) put it, there are always links between private life and work, and personal relationships control everything. Secondly, IDDRS (2006) states that armed conflict reinforces inequalities and ruins social capital and damages social infrastructure. What makes the situation worse is that some people, as a result of the prolonged armed conflict, have created the belief that violence is an effective means to resolve interpersonal problems and earn a living. This makes the post-conflict era as dangerous and problematic as the while-conflict stage. People have started to believe that violence is a good tool to solve problem and they use it. This diminishes the chance for any dialogue to take place (IDDRS, 2006). People are not very keen to take guides and instructions or to do what they are told. They follow the orders of the people to whom they are linked and who have supported them to get the job. The language of dialogue is weakened because of all these issues and the language of power, metaphorically speaking, prevails the situation.

Therefore, the factors that affect this stage are related to the uncertain financial situation which is the result of the armed prolonged conflict and also to the nature of the Iraqi culture which has produced many negative features such as favouritism, selecting the tribe's or group's values over the public interests and linking private life with work and giving personal relationships a priority over skills and knowledge. The armed conflict has reinforced inequalities and uncertainty.

#### 5.10. The strengths of the Implementing stage

Interviewee 8, Architect; Interviewee, 9, Engineer) described the Implementing stage as the harvest time when all the plans became real and the dream became true (Interviewee 1 Governor; Interviewee 2, Councillor; Interviewee 3 Educational officer; Interviewee 6). It also gave devastated people who had lived in a war-torn country hope that life would re-start and the country would be back to normalcy (Finance Officer; Interviewee 7, Director

General; Interviewee, 9, Engineer; Interviewee 10, planning officer). This emphasises the idea that education is the means of peace building in the countries devastated by war and that education can help in encouraging peace and democracy building in the country. This is compatible with Hawrylenko (2010) definition of the role of education in the post-conflict country. According to Hawrylenko (2010), education speeds the reconstruction process, reduces poverty, prevents conflict and helps in economic growth. Seeing schools being re-built, people gain a sense of achievement and certainty and that a new life is started.

### 5.11. The challenges of the Implementing stage

One of the most important challenges of the Implementing stage is that it reflects the gaps in the Planning and Organising stages (Interviewee 10, planning officer). Interviewee 6, Finance Officer stated that unpredicted circumstances that occurred at the Implementing stage could hamper the progress and the project, so proper planning could be useful in preparing for these unpredicted circumstances. Interviewee, 1 Governor assigned a great role to the financial planning because any gap of the financial planning could lead to the disruption of the Implementing stage. According to (Interviewee, 1 Governor), corruption played a significant role in the incompleteness of a project and its improper Implementing stage. Corruption means the lack of transparency and self-assessment so no one knows where the money goes.

The other factor that can affect the Implementing stage is the extent to which communicating among stakeholders is possible. Iraqi society is constituted by bureaucracy and hierarchal patterns; the matter which also encourages the failure of communication among people (Interviewee 2, Councillor). Bonner *et al.* (2011) recommend that in the Implementing stage quality assurance and capacity building should be on-going practices and not temporary ones.

They should be integrated in the programme and should not be dealt as extras, otherwise this will threaten the implementing of the project. Moreover, Bonner *et al.* (2011) also argue that monitoring, evaluation and reporting are also on-going activities that should be considered as integral part of the programme. The role of these activities is to provide management information to the programme team and assurance to both government and development partners. The reported information can be fed back and used for creating more facilities, and ascertaining more needs for the future. This should take place in an open and transparent way by a multi-disciplinary team. These activities of monitoring, evaluating and reporting should

always be conducted because in the Implementing stage there is a chance for risks. These risks need to be monitored, evaluated and reported in a transparent method in order to prevent their increase and to mitigate their effects.

However, these recommendations by Bonner *et al.* (2011) can be hampered by the collectivist culture that shapes the individuals' behaviour and mentality. They are also faced with the type of relationships and understanding of roles. For instance, monitoring and evaluation are not applicable in a society that considers the different opinion as hostile or any criticism directed to one member as an attack. Additionally, monitoring can be effective only when people are treated equally by law despite their race, personal relationships, gender and tribe. Reporting, moreover, should be employed for the public benefit and not for personal gains such as gaining the satisfaction of authoritarian figures when reporting someone.

#### 5.12. The strengths of the Legislative stage

The significance of the Legislative stage of the process of school rebuilding project is that it reinforces the idea that law is being enforced in post-conflict Iraq (Interviewee 1 Governor). It is the stage which establishes evidence that what rule the country are law and regulations and everyone is equal in front of them. Interviewee 4, Architect stated that building schools was not only about the physical presence of the school; it is also about the fact that this school represented all the regulations and rules that should be taken into account in building a school. It is the beginning of enforcing laws that protects human beings and guarantees their safety. Hence, school rebuilding in post-conflict Iraq does not only create a sense of hope and optimism, but also a sense of security and safety as well as certainty that the new Iraq will be ruled by legislations and laws not by personal gains and bureaucracy or the concept of the one-opinion dominance. There is a thirst on behalf of devastated people for justice and equality which can be achieved only by the enforcement of law. Davis (2004) claims that education should be a means to return to normalcy. Vapnek *et al.* (2016) state that the enforcement of law in the post-conflict Iraq is a must because the enforcement of law and development are interrelated and intertwined. The enforcement of law is also essential for sustaining the legitimacy of government. During the conflict, people become used to violence and using their power to restore their rights. In the post-conflict Iraq, people should feel the presence of the legitimate government through courts and enforcing decisions for all the citizens. A new understanding should be created in the post-conflict era. During the conflict and in the pre-conflict era in Iraq, law was used as a tool to exercise power over the weak,

poor and vulnerable. Law was used for the benefit of the elite while the poor and vulnerable were deprived of justice and their rights. Therefore, the Legislative stage is essential for those deprived areas and devastated people to gain the sense of justice and human rights as well as equality.

### 5.13. The challenges of the Legislative stage

The data showed that the challenges of the Legislative stage were centred on that the legislations and regulations were established for a different understanding of teaching and learning, different goals of schools and education in general, different context as well as different purpose of education and establishing schools (Interviewee 2, Councillor). Interviewee 10, planning officer believed that new legislations should be established to be compatible with the era and the new orientation of the country. Interviewee 11, procurement officer stated that legislations should be updated in order to make people feel the changes that had taken place in the country. The new legislations should be context-related and take into consideration the changes that Iraq has experienced and the recent needs that these changes have brought. There appears to be a contradiction between enforcing law and the personal benefits of a group of people. This is why these group of people are keen not to enforce law:

*The challenges appear when there is a contradiction between some profits of stakeholders and enforcing the legislations in the project. Ethical issues are a priority over money. To some people ignoring some legislation for the sake of the success of the project is not a big deal. This is not the culture we need in Iraq which is trying to build democracy and freedom. Safety starts from clean fresh water to strong and well-built pillars and walls (Interviewee 8, Architect)*

What was commonly used in the pre-conflict and while conflict were, as Knapp (2007), describes them authoritarian building. The other type of school building, as Knapp (2007) distinguishes is the democratic building. The schools where the power of the teacher is exaggerated and practiced over the subordinates (the students) were the type of schools that Iraq used to have. The goal of education, at that time, was to teach the principles of obedience and acquiring the instruction of the political elite and to embody the way people dealt with their rulers (Espinoza, 2013). Hence, legislations established for those schools will definitely be different from schools that are established to teach the students how to self- express and demonstrate their opinions freely. Moreover, the definition of schooling, teaching and



learning has changed. Teaching is not any more transmitting information by the teacher to the students (Tan, 2016) who store the information and recall it in the exam. The teacher is the only source of information and the students are merely empty vessels to be filled with knowledge (Bond, 2010). This approach to teaching reflects what is going in the external context of the classroom (Crawford & Novak, 2013) and the way the subordinate are treated by the superior in the hierarchal pattern. This understanding of teaching and learning requires different rules and legislations to when teaching and learning are viewed as an interaction process where the student's knowledge plays an important role in learning and where the students participate in the process of teaching and learning.

Democratic countries, to which post-conflict Iraq aspires to belong to, allow students to express themselves and take part in their learning process. In this case, all the old legislations should change because they represent a different type of teaching, learning, teacher and students' roles.

By the completion of the discussion of the strengths and challenges, the two research objectives of *Evaluate the current status of school building delivery in post-conflict Iraq* and *Explore the school building delivery process* has been achieved. The answers to the two research questions of *What is the current status of school building delivery in Iraq?* *What is the school building delivery process?* have also been completed by the above discussion.

#### 5.14. The interaction between the stakeholders and the Ministry of Education in terms of school building process

Success of any school building project is connected with the positive and transparent communication between the stakeholders and the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education is supposed to provide information for the school project management such as the number of students, classrooms, laboratories and the description of the furniture and rooms. Information about funding and budget is also required. In bureaucratic systems this transparency is absent and it is difficult to obtain reliable information. Interviewee 1 Governor mentioned the rigidity of the administration which was about not being flexible and context-sensitive. The Ministry sometimes gives instructions and rules which are very strict and they do not allow any freedom to discuss or disagree. Moreover, according to Interviewee 1 Governor, the lack of transparency becomes worse with the presence of unqualified people who make the interaction with the top administration a complicated

matter: “*Appointing unqualified people will also have its negative consequences*”. The lack of transparency also prevents the stakeholders from obtaining useful files and knowing what is going on.

Culture is also present in interpreting the data of this part. What prevents constructive interaction and communication is the hierarchal system that imposes strict limitations on people’s behaviour and performance. The subordinate cannot disagree or discuss with the superior and they can only carry out orders. The culture of obedience which characterises the hierarchal patterns and systems does not give any chance for communication and suggesting different things to that have been made by the authoritarian figures (Interviewee 2, Councillor). The lack of communicative and dialogue can have its negative outcome on the project in the sense that the employees and the stakeholders will not report any weakness or gaps in the project lest they lose their job or are grounded.

The lack of team spirit is also expressed by Interviewee 3 Educational officer who explained that the lack of team spirit had negative outcomes:

*That there is no co-ordination between the departments in the sense that everyone does their work independently of the others. There is not sharing in the opinions or perspectives. We all need to draw upon the skills and experience of each other from within the Ministry and the partners and suppliers*

The lack of the team spirit can be explained through two avenues. The first one is that in a hierarchal system and collectivist culture everyone endeavours to satisfy the superior rather than the public benefits and the team. Everyone works hard to please the people in power and to get rewards from them. The second explanation is that people do not share experience or knowledge because they think that, in this case, the success of the project will be assigned to other individuals and not to them. Competitive spirit rather than cooperative spirit shapes the individuals’ behaviour and actions and makes them race to satisfy people in power or at the top of the pyramid.

UNICEF (2006) and Higgins *et al.*, (2005) call for the involvement of teachers, parents and community as well as stakeholders in planning the school building because this will lead to a school building that takes into account the needs of everyone and meets the requirements of different types of people. Planning and design should be a shared work. However, with the present situation which can be described as bureaucratic and non-transparent, achieving the participation of community, teachers, parents and other stakeholders in planning seems a difficult issue.

#### 5.15. The good practice and lessons learnt from international contexts that have improved the delivery of schools

How the interviewees thought about how a proper stage of school building delivery was derived from what they had heard and read about in other countries who had experienced the same circumstances in the building school projects. They had an understanding of every stage and how it should be. Of course this understanding had nothing to do with the real situation which had its input and uniqueness. The question of *Why do you think proper planning/organising/implementing/legislative is needed for school building delivery process?* is not about the stage in the real world but about what concept the interviewees have about the stage from their reading or using media.

For example, in the Planning stage every related issue should be discussed to avoid disappointment later in the Implementing stage, and every member of the stakeholder should know their role and duties. Different decisions should be taken such as the ones about financial analysis and risk assessment (Interviewee 1 Governor, Interviewee 3 Educational officer, Interviewee 4, Architect, Interviewee 5, Procurement officer). Using the strategy of monitoring is essential at this stage (Interviewee 6, Finance Officer). Interviewee 3 Educational officer emphasised the significance of the planning stage as it provided all the information necessary for the project and made everything clear such as the number of students, classrooms, libraries and how rooms were designed in a way to create comfort and easiness for both the teachers and students.

The knowledge of the interviewees of the requirement of every stage has been learned from different sources such as the success stories of other countries. The interviewees spoke about the requirement of every stage but when they started about the real world situation in Iraqi some bitterness can be detected in their words because what is applied for the other countries can still be difficult to be applied because Iraqi context is unique. The interviewees have

learned different lessons from the Western countries such as schools should be established in a way to promote learning and to give the students comfort and easiness to achieve. They are aware of the relationship between properly-built schools and the students' achievement (Earthman & Lemasters, 2013). Interviewee, 9, Engineer stated that the experience of the other countries was useful for the Iraqi people. It taught the Iraqi people that they were not alone and there was always a chance to survive in a war-weakened country. Interviewee 4, Architect believed that all post-conflict countries had something in common which was that conflict retarded development process and eroded the developmental foundation and infrastructure was dilapidated as well as resources were diverted from health and social services to military expenditure. However, most of these countries have survived the post-conflict challenges and people could re-build their infrastructure. For example, in a province in Congo, community women participated in the construction of a school. Communities were required to supply labour in order to support in constructing schools (USAID, 2009). Justino (2015) also mentions how involving the young boys and girls in social activities can reduce the level of violence and direct the youths' thinking towards building forms of constructive citizenship and avoid the violence re-ignition. School curricula in the post-conflict period can also play a vital role in peace building as what has happened in post-conflict African countries. School curricula could teach the young children about tolerance of differences in ethnicity or groups and how to find conflict resolutions within the family or the community.

#### 5.16. Solutions and a strategy for improved delivery of school building in Iraq

##### A- What is required for the Planning stage

Planning stage challenges were characterised with financial difficulties and the lack of the culture of dialogue and open communication with others. The other difficulty is concerned with the lack of transparency and that planning is exclusively done by the Ministry. The solutions which are suggested by the interviewees as far as the Planning stage is concerned can be summarised as follows. The first step in achieving an effective Planning stage is being realistic and trying to list priorities which are compatible with the available budget. *Realistic* here means to prioritise needs and consider the most urgent ones. The second step is applying the principle of monitoring and evaluation and reporting any gap to the management the matter which requires the dominance of law and the equality of everyone in front of the law. The third step is that planning should take into account the parents and children's needs for peace building, a shelter, and security. This issue reduces the exclusive power of the

Ministry over every stage and every part of the project. The fourth step towards a more transparent Planning stage is enhancing team spirit and stopping blaming each other. This can be created by enhancing the sense of mutual responsibility and that the success of the project means everyone's success. The fifth step is attempting to establish a culture of transparency and openness and making the school building project the start point towards the bigger society. This can be done by involving other stakeholders, the community and parents and children in the process of school delivery. Amongst the factors that contribute to a more comprehensive is creating the culture of dialogue and communication with all stakeholders and the management. This is a long-term process and school building project should be the initiative step of creating a culture of dialogue where people tolerate different opinions and attitudes and accept them. Avoiding the culture of competition and replacing it with the culture of co-operation is also another important factor. This can be done by creating the feeling that the project is a mutual issue and that its success means everyone has succeeded. It is also creating the spirit of complying with the rules and not specific persons. Realistic approach is needed at this stage when planning finance for a school building and also having a contingency plan in place would be appropriate to overcome any hurdles that may appear such as time delays or financing problems. This can be done through undertaking a proper risk analysis and getting ready for the unexpected

So, school building, and education in general, is that starting point of not only peace building and economic recovery (World Bank, 2005; UNESCO, 2011; Ahrari, Zaremohazzabehi, & Othman, 2016), but also social and cultural transformation towards a more democratic society where dialogue is the method of solving disputes and conflict.

### **B- What is required for the Organising stage**

The challenges that Organising stage undergoes, according to the interviewees' data, are related to the culture dominant in the Iraqi society and which is collectivist culture. According to Kaur & Noman (2015), members of the collectivist culture accept the unequal distribution of power. Yoon (2010) states that the collectivist culture members exhibit characteristics such as tolerance and respect for other people, religious faith, and obedience. Annekinda & Rahmani (2015) points out that in the collectivist culture members work to meet the group's goals and to satisfy their bosses and those who are superior in the hierarchy

administrative patterns and behave according to group's norms in communal forms. Suggested solutions to the problems faced in the Organising stage can be summarised as follows. Firstly, adopting transparency and the criteria of skills, knowledge and experience when selecting people for employment. Secondly, the team manager should be fully aware of the capacity of each member of the team and assign the work to them depending on their proven experience and skills. Transparency is needed at this stage. Thirdly, communicating with the team members by the team managers in a direct open and clear way. This necessitates the development of the culture of dialogue and accepting the other. Fourthly, stop blaming each other and start to think about the benefits building new schools and new society. It is essential to cultivate the sense of mutual responsibility inside the members and that the project is a mutual work and encourage the staff to work harder and connecting the success of the project with the hard working employees. Fifthly, monitoring is also needed. Ministries should appoint a person who really monitors the progress and the needs of school building project. Encouraging dialogue and communication among the stakeholders and between the management and employees. Sixthly, setting clear agenda for everybody and not considering that these agendas are personal and strengthening the connection of the net and also specifying a department in every ministry that deals with the affairs of the distant cities and areas. Seventhly, allocating special funds and budgets for organising tasks and duties and assistants for this stage. Eighthly, reporting to the administration about any gap or error can help save a lot of time, effort and money. This requires a high level of transparency. Reports in a corrupted context can be used for personal benefits to gain incentives and positions and to revenge on others.

### **C- What is required for the Implementing stage**

The challenges that occur in the Implementing stage are related to that if there are gaps in the Planning and Organising stages, they will create gaps and challenges in the Implementing stage. This necessitates that transparency, monitoring, evaluating and reporting. This seems difficult in the circumstances that surround the school building project i.e. the culture of communication, the hierarchal pattern and collectivist culture. The recommendations for a better Implementing stage are: enhancing the culture of dialogue, the team spirit, and more importantly, teaching people to work for the public benefits instead of personal gains through adopting the policy of rewards and incentives for those who work hard and participate in the development of the project. Authoritarian figures and behaviour should be avoided and

attempts should be made to make the stakeholders, community, parents and children take part in the projects and decision-making.

#### **D- What is required for the Legislative stage:**

The challenges that occurred in the Legislative stage are that the current legislations are in need for updating because they have been designed and established for a different context, a different definition of teaching and learning and a different goal of education. Additionally, law was used to protect the interests of the political elites while it was used against the weak and the poor. There is a need to make the legislations context-related and more flexible. They should be established in a way that meets the requirements of the Iraqi people currently and support in achieving peace and justice as well as settlement. Based on these challenges in the Legislative stage, there are a number of recommendations of what should be done to achieve a proper Legislative stage. First of all, transparency should be encouraged in order to facilitate understanding the needs and how to meet them, encouraging the culture of accepting the different opinions and perspectives. Efforts should be made to transform understanding the role of legislations and law from being a tool to protect the political elite to a tool for spreading justice and safety and security in the country after people have been deprived of them for decades. People should learn not to be scared of law or the enforcement of law; they should rather internalise the belief that laws are there to protect and support them. The Legislative stage is essential because if it is performed properly in the school building delivery it will give people the impression that the government legitimacy is back and the law enforcement is back; the matter which provides the Iraqi with a sense of security and being protected.

#### **5.17. Summary**

This chapter presented the data interpretation and discussed the links between the previous studies that had been reviewed in the Literature Review and the results of data interpretation. The research aim and objectives have been achieved through the data which have been collated through semi-structured interviews with a different group of stakeholders of a school building project. The research questions have also been answered. The aim of this research is to develop a school building delivery strategy in Iraq. First, the first two objectives have been fulfilled through the discussion of the challenges that each stage of the school building delivery process has as well as the strengths and the challenges of each stage. The first two objectives are:

- 1- Evaluate the current status of school building delivery in post-conflict Iraq
- 2- Explore the school building delivery process

The current status of school building delivery in post-conflict Iraq undergoes different difficulties that spring from the political, economic, social and cultural circumstances that have been produced by the conflict. Added to the prolonged armed conflict is the Iraqi culture that is the collectivist culture which has some features that deepen the negative outcome of the conflict. Collectivist culture is the culture whose members' loyalty is to the group's values and beliefs rather than the public benefits, it is the culture that accepts the unequal distribution of power and the control of an authoritarian figure who is obeyed but never argued; it is the culture that accepts a hierarchal relationships and patterns in the family, in school and at work, and it is the culture that mixes work with private life and the appointment of employees depends to a large extent on family relations and being connected with an authoritarian figure. Regarding the second objectives, the chapter has discussed the strengths and the challenges of every stage and how the current circumstances of post-conflict Iraq have overshadowed every aspect of these stages. The strengths of these stages are derived from the fact that they all signal the beginning of the birth of a new era. They all give hope and faith of the future and the legitimacy of the government; the matter which provides the sense of security and safety. The challenges of these stages, however, can be explained in terms of the financial challenges and the economic deterioration and the collapse of the infrastructure in post-conflict Iraq such as health, education, police and justice. The collectivist culture also plays a crucial role in creating obstacles that hinder proper school building process stages. By this discussion, the two research questions have been answered: *What is the current status of school building delivery in Iraq? What is the school building delivery process?*

The third research objective: *Critically review the good practice and lessons learnt from international contexts that have improved the delivery of schools* has been fulfilled by discussing that the interviewees showed knowledge of how schools were built abroad in Western countries and in other countries that had experienced similar conflict as Iraq. The context differs from Iraq and those countries but there are some lessons to be learned such as being transparent and adopting dialogue to discuss related issues. The most important thing to be learned and adopted is determination and belief in oneself to start a new era. This also



answers the third research question: *What are the lessons learned from international contexts that have improved the delivery of schools?*

The fourth objective: *The interaction between the stakeholders and the Ministry of Education in terms of school building process* has been fulfilled through discussing the obstacles of establishing constructive transparent communication between the stakeholders and the Ministry of Education. The hierarchal pattern and the formal relationships as well as the concept of the authoritarian that should be obeyed but not discussed, all have made communication and the dialogue a difficult thing to perform. This also answers the fourth research question: *What is the status of the interaction between the stakeholders and the Ministry of Education in terms of school building process?*

The fifth objective of the study has been fulfilled: *Produce a strategy for improved delivery of school buildings in Iraq*. A strategy has been suggested that takes into account the needs of the post-conflict Iraq and a number of recommendations of some steps that support in mitigating the negative consequences of the conflict and the outcomes of the collectivist culture that plays a vital role in shaping how people behave and react. This answers the fifth question of the study: *What is the best strategy for improving delivery of school building in Iraq and that meets the needs and the requirements of the current era?*

Based on Nicholson's (2004) figure regarding the stages of school building delivery process in the UK, this chapter about school building delivery process can be summarised as follows:

Figure 5.1. Summary of the stages of school building delivery in post-conflict Iraq:

**Stage One:** Initiation (Identify the need for a building project by the Ministry of Education in Iraq without involving community- This stage is implemented only by the Ministry of Education)



**Stage Two:** Preparation: (Set up a project team , Ensure the building project supports the legislations and laws in Iraq, the same design is used for school building in all areas- Community is not involved- No communication between stakeholders and the Ministry)



**Stage Three:** Development (Organisation stage)

Project leader selects teams but pressures are placed on him/her to choose people who are related to someone at the top of the hierarchy or belong to a particular tribe or family, lack of transparency and constructive dialogue)



**Stage Four:** Construction ( Can be disappointing if there is any fault in the previous stages or the fund is not received from the Ministry)

## Chapter 6

### Conclusion

After presenting data analysis and data interpretation, the main features of the school building delivery in post-conflict Iraq have been explored and the challenges that face this process have also been identified via the participants' perspectives and viewpoints. In this chapter the results of the whole study will be summarised in order to identify the conclusions and recommendations. Therefore, the structure of this chapter will be as follows: Firstly, discussing the achievement of every research objective, secondly, presenting the theoretical and practical implications, thirdly, and suggesting further research areas.

#### 6.1. Objective 1: Evaluate the current status of school building delivery in post-conflict Iraq

This objective has been achieved in both the literature review and the data. The literature review has provided a detailed-description of the status of school building delivery process in Iraq over the years of pre-conflict, conflict and post-conflict. The empirical study has also provided detailed explanation of the challenges that the school building delivery process is facing at all stages. At the top of these challenges are the financial difficulties that have been resulted from Iraq being in a post-conflict era where economy and infrastructure have been destroyed, and financial aids from organisation are limited and mismanaged. Contract about school building can be cancelled due to the lack of financial support. In addition to the financial difficulties that mainly hinder the school building delivery process, there are the administrative issues that have also formed an obstacle in the face of achieving school building delivery process that is smooth and successful. The relationships between the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders is based on a hierarchal pattern which itself emanates from the nature of the Iraqi social system that adheres to a collectivist culture. This culture imposes specific patterns of behaviour on people. The oldest people, parents, bosses, teachers must be respected by younger people, children, employees, and students. By respect it is meant keeping silent and not discussing what is said by the first group. It is also about following the group norms and values even at the expense of individual interests. In this hierarchal pattern of management and authority it becomes very difficult to communicate with people who are at the top of the hierarchy or criticise any plan or measurement.

Collectivist culture also assumes that any criticism by someone to the other can be considered as an insult to the criticised person and the group they belong to.

Another difficulty that faces the school building delivery process is the fact that the legislations that are enforced in school building delivery process are not up to data and that they need to be replaced by legislations that take into account the current circumstances of post-conflict Iraq and the modern definitions of teaching, learning special needs, and parent and community role in children's education.

## 6.2. Objective 2: Explore the school building delivery process

This objective has been achieved in both the literature review and the data findings. The literature review in this study has presented details about the stages of school building delivery process and what happens at every stage. The data elicited from the participants via semi-structured interviewing have contributed to constructing more knowledge about the school building delivery process. The participants explained what happens at every stage and the obstacles as well as the strengths of every stage of the process. At the planning stage the positive side is that planning is about creating a project that will serve people and bring peace and settlement to them. The negative point, however, is that on many occasions, people who are appointed in the planning sector are not qualified for taking the responsibility of school building planning, but they were hired due to tribe or family considerations or due to favouritism issues. At the organising level, the positive point is that distributing tasks for the staff and what they have to do makes work easier. The negative point, nevertheless, is same as that in the planning stage that some people are not professional enough to perform a task in addition to that communicating with some other people is difficult due to the culture that shapes people's behaviour in Iraq. The implementing stage is the stage where dreams come true and plans are achieved, but again the obstacles that have been mentioned above hinder the achievement of a proper implementing stage. The chaos resulted from the breakdown in communication among different sectors and departments makes difficult to implement the plans not to mention the financial crisis and the lack of funds. The legislative stage has also its complexities because these legislations were created for a different time, purpose and context. Change is a keyword in post-conflict Iraq and so legislations must experience this change.

### 6.3. Objective 3: Critically review the good practice and lessons learnt from international contexts that have improved the delivery of schools

This objective has been achieved in both the literature review and the data findings. The literature review presents experiences of post-conflict countries that have survived the austerity and the financial scarcity in the post-conflict era. The participants have shown good knowledge of how school building delivery process should be from the experience of other countries. Other countries have established schools in the post-conflict era to initiate peace and stability in the war-torn societies. Other countries have also taken the children and community's needs into account. These countries, in addition, have indulged community and local people in school building. Post-conflict countries in Africa have established schools with very primitive materials. The good lesson is that re-building schools is the first step in building peace in a post-conflict country. The study participants are aware that establishing schools that are similar in structure and function to those in the Western world is not possible at the moment in Iraq. Priorities differ and what is urgently needed school buildings that shelter the children and passionate and compassionate teachers that are aware of the great responsibility they hold at present. Iraqi people can establish Western-style schools due to a number of reasons. First, there is scarcity of funds. Second, what is required now and in the light of the financial circumstances is a place for children to escape being abducted or used by armed gangs. Lessons from the school building delivery process in the West are very useful but Iraqi people need some stages to implement these lessons. African lessons are good. African countries are also experiencing poverty and austerity, but they endeavour to establish their schools no matter the luxury of the building is or the style; they want to educate children because peace and prosperity start from education.

### 6.4. Objective 4: The interaction between the stakeholders and the Ministry of Education in terms of school building process

This objective has been achieved in both the literature review and the data findings. The interaction between the stakeholders and the Ministry of Education is formal shaped by the superior-subordinate relationship. Superiors are only to be obeyed and never discussed even in the case of making mistakes, and subordinates are always to obey and carry out orders without discussion. This prevents constructive discussion between the two parts and creates a rapport which looks solid from the outside, but it is very tenuous from the inside. The dominance of competitive spirit instead of team work makes subordinates endeavour not to carry out the tasks for the sake of the success of the work but for pleasing the superior and

showing their loyalty to them. In such an environment the target is more approaching the superiors and that is what makes the competitive spirit stronger than the team spirit because everyone attempts to show their personal ability to satisfy those who are in the upper steps of the hierarchy.

#### 6.5. Objective 5: Produce a strategy for improved delivery of school buildings in Iraq

A strategy has been suggested from the interviews for a more effective school building delivery process in post-conflict Iraq. The elements of strategy have been derived from the participants' description and detailed discussion of the school building delivery process in post-conflict Iraq and the challenges this process is facing. The strategy has also been established based on the gaps that the participants have indicated and which hamper the progress of the school building delivery process. The participants suggested some steps to be taken and which they thought to be supportive in changing some aspects that shape people performance at work such as increasing monitoring and self-monitoring, encouraging people to work for the sake of work, establishing constructive communication between employees and managers on the one hand and between stakeholders and the Ministry of Education on the other hand.

#### 6.6. Contribution to theory

Although there is extensive literature on post-conflict countries and school building especially the African countries, there is still a dearth of literature on Iraq. This study has contributed to the literature of post-conflict countries in general and school building delivery process in particular by constructing knowledge about the school building delivery process in post-conflict Iraq and that its features that have been shaped by the political, economic, social and cultural factors. The study and its findings are unique. The sources of uniqueness are that the study focus is on the stages of the school building delivery in war-torn Iraq and the characteristics of every stage. Approaching school building delivery in this way has not taken place before in the literature about Iraq or about the school building delivery process in other post-conflict countries. Investigating the school building delivery process within a political, economic, social and cultural framework of Iraq is also unique. Another source of uniqueness is that the study has identified the challenges that hinder the progress of school building delivery process which can be related to the political, economic, social and cultural real situation of Iraq. The study contributes to the literature by identifying these challenges

while other studies have only surveyed the political and economic challenges. Another source of uniqueness is the recommendations and the strategy suggested. Because the study has addressed the challenges of the school building delivery process in a unique way, its recommendations will also be unique because they are based on discussing these challenges. Besides that, the data that have been collected through semi-structured interviews are original and have not been published before; which is another source of uniqueness.

The study contribution to knowledge will be represented by the recommendations that were made in the final chapter. These recommendations will be sent to the participants to be used as a guide to improve the school delivery process I post-conflict Iraq. The study and its recommendations will widen the participants', and everyone who is involved in school delivery process, to benefit from other' experience and adopt dialogue and communication as a means to develop the performance in all the stages of the school delivery process. the study will aid in discovering the gaps in the performance of the stakeholders and the most effective way to deal and bridge these gaps. The stakeholders are aware that the absence of communication and dialogues as well as accepting the other impacted the whole process of school delivery, so they will endeavour to find treatment which eradicates these negative aspects.

Communication will be encouraged amongst the stakeholders by undertaking training courses that show the value and the importance of communication amongst stakeholders and between stakeholders and the management. This also can be done through creating an environment which enables the stakeholders, and everyone involved in the school building delivery process to express their own views. Establishing an atmosphere of equality also helps and encourages communication.

## 6.7. Contribution to Practice

The study has created a strategy that supports stakeholders and the government to build and deliver schools in a way that guarantees benefits for the children and parents and community. The pillars of this strategy are respecting the Iraqi society uniqueness and values, the Iraqi schooling and education special context, and increasing needs for a new educational and legislative systems. The study, nevertheless, does not claim that this strategy will lead to dramatic changes in the whole country of Iraq; the study suggests starting with schools and

education will gradually lead to changes in people's attitudes and concepts. Schools are minimised copy of the bigger society and they are interdependent. When the change occurs in schools, it extends to include other aspects of society.

## 6.8. Suggesting further research areas

This study can be a foundation for further studies to build on to enhance knowledge about the school building delivery process in Iraq or in any other post-conflict country. There are some suggested area of further research:

- 1- Similar studies with a different research boundaries

This study has focused on the stages of school building delivery process as the research centre. There are other areas for searching such as hospital building delivery process.

- 2- Similar studies with different units of analysis

The unit of analysis of this study was every stage of the school building delivery process. Further research can focus on one stage and the sub-stages that constitute each one.

- 3- Similar studies with different contexts

This study has been undertaken in Iraq. Further studies can cover other countries that have been/ are being torn by wars and conflicts such as Syria, Libya, Yemen and Somalia.

## 6.9. Concluding Remarks

The main findings of this study, from both primary and secondary data, have been summarised in this chapter. The studies that have addressed the school building delivery process in post-conflict Iraq in more details are scarce, this study covers this topic and creates an insight of the stages that make up the school building delivery process and the political, economic, social and cultural factors that play a role in shaping these stages. The study, therefore, contributes to the knowledge as follows:

- Identifying the challenges and strengths of every stage of the school building delivery process i.e. planning, organising, implementing and legislative
- Identifying the political, economic, social and cultural factors that shape this process
- Identifying how stakeholders made use of lessons from other post-conflict countries and how they understood the uniqueness of the Iraqi situation.



This Chapter has also recommended a framework for school establishing for Iraq which takes into account the Iraqi context and the technological age requirements. The framework focuses on the participation of Iraqi community in the school design project and justifies this by the observation other researchers have made that involving the community, students, teachers and other stakeholders results in a more user satisfaction and a better design. The human rights- based approach seems compatible with the Iraqi context as a post-conflict country. The human right- based approach is established on the assumption that a school replicates people from different races, religions and sectors to one place; the matter which may lead to the decentralisation of some groups . This approach addresses different people as one group connected through humanity and deals with them as individuals responsible for the building of society that tolerates differences and variety; which is why the human rights-based approach is an appropriate way to enable Iraq take off in the journey to democracy.

- Proposing a group of recommendations for school building delivery process

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## Appendix I

### The Interviews Data Tables

#### 1- The challenges of every stage

Table 1: The challenges of the Planning stage:

The Participants	The Planning stage challenges
Interviewee 1, Governor	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- <i>The school design should contain all the requirements of a human being who is physically fit or disabled</i></li> <li>2- <i>The challenge is to create a mini society that represents the outside society</i></li> </ol>
Interviewee 2, Councillor	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- <i>We need to be realistic at this stage. Iraq is a post-conflict country which is deteriorated by war and so are all the services.</i></li> <li>2- <i>Our ultimate goal is to plan a school building that has the very basic requirements such as sanitation and drinking water.</i></li> <li>3- <i>Our basic goal is a place that accommodates children and provide a safe place where they avoid the dangers of being in the streets or being taken to be members of gangs.</i></li> </ol>
Interviewee 3, Educational officer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- <i>Students have to go to classes in three shifts -- morning, midday and late afternoon. Classes are noisy and crowded and no one understands what the teacher is saying.</i></li> <li>2- <i>There is a failure on behalf of the government reconstruction programme to rebuild new schools in replacement of the schools that were destroyed.</i></li> <li>3- <i>Last May, construction firms got paid by Iraqi Education Ministry and began tearing down hundreds of old school buildings across Iraq under contracts requiring the companies to build bigger schools. However, what happened was that the schools have not been built and the Ministry says that it does not have funds for new buildings.</i></li> <li>4- <i>At this stage, planning to establish a building and rooms to accommodate the overflow of the students is a must.</i></li> </ol>

Interviewee 4, Architect	<p>1- <i>The challenges that face use when planning a school building is how to design a building that accommodate the huge number of students and at the same time be affordable and achievable</i></p> <p>2- <i>At the moment what is needed is a building that contain the students and protect them from being on the streets and the dangers that follow this. Luxurious schools are not our targets at the moment.</i></p>
Interviewee 5, Procurement officer.	<p>1- <i>I am responsible for the activities of the department which are responsible for purchasing. This requires that I assign duties to everyone in the project and review the work. I have also to make a plan for the purchase of supplies, services and tools and equipment.</i></p>
Interviewee 6, Finance Officer	<p>1- <i>I have some challenges related to the project funding and the budget allocated to the project. I need to make sure that the principle of value for money is applied in every action I do.</i></p>
Interviewee 7, Director General	<p>1- <i>Tribal and religious leaders can suddenly request a change of land. In some case this can be for personal gain. Another challenge is we not have a proper school mapping process.</i></p>
Interviewee 8, Architect	<p>1- <i>The challenges that we may face are related to the fact that we need to design the building within the given budget, land, student numbers and rooms and the facilities that are required and which the budget allows.</i></p> <p>2- <i>We need to modify the design and the plan in accordance with the huge numbers of the students which the project school has to accommodate</i></p>
Interviewee 9, Engineer	<p>1- <i>External challenges are related to that there are many issues in planning a school building such as the land, the soil, the structure, the environment, the trees.</i></p> <p>2- <i>Internal Issues are related to such as the walls, the height, the toilets and sanitary and other things.</i></p> <p>3- <i>They all should be compatible with the standards and within the specified budget</i></p>
Interviewee 10, planning officer	<p>1- <i>We need to plan everything at this stage</i></p>
Interviewee 11, procurement officer	<p>1- <i>It is important to make appropriate purchases for the project and make sure that all the</i></p>



	<i>purchasing needs are met and that the plan for purchase has been set and all services are planned and organised.</i>
Interviewee 12, Finance Officer	<p><i>1- The challenges come from that I have to set the financial policies and establish a strategy that meets both the project goals and the budget allocated for the project</i></p> <p><i>2- I have to prioritise things and put them in order according to their importance sometimes we need to give up things if they are not essential.</i></p>

Table 2: Challenges of the Organising stage:

The Participants	The Organising stage challenges
Interviewee 1, Governor	1- <i>The challenges that face us in the organising stage are how to assign tasks to the appropriate people who have a proven experience and skills as well as knowledge and loyalty and honesty</i>
Interviewee 2, Councillor	1- <i>We need to manage everything and assign the right people for the tight tasks.</i> 2- <i>Everyone blames the other for not maintaining schools or rebuilding new schools</i> 3- <i>Ministry of Education says that there is a huge need for rebuilding new schools but the situation is still the same: classrooms are overcrowded, students do not find a place to sit, sanitation facilities are not there</i>
Interviewee 3, Educational officer	1- <i>there is no co-ordination between the departments in the sense that everyone does their work independently of the others</i> 2- <i>There is not sharing in the opinions or perspectives</i> 3- <i>We all need to draw upon the skills and experience of each other from within the Ministry and the partners and suppliers</i> 4- <i>The challenge is that most of us are not used to work in a team.</i>
Interviewee 4, Architect	1- <i>I need to deal with other stakeholders and we are still in need to develop the dialogue and communication culture to reach a conclusion</i> 2- <i>Some stakeholders want to impose their opinion and they use their position to give orders rather than communicate</i> 3- <i>The difficulty is the hierarchal relationships dominant everywhere and which form an obstacle to get smoothly the information you want.</i>
Interviewee 5, Procurement officer.	1- <i>In assigning duties and roles there is always contact with different type of people who have not the skills and knowledge for their roles or who are not willing to take instructions.</i> 2- <i>The other challenge is the provision of goods and products as we have difficulties in the delivery time due to the country security circumstances.</i>
Interviewee 6, Finance Officer	1- <i>The stage is about managing cash flows and</i>

	<p><i>budgets liaising with different organisations so at this stage I need to make sure that everything is organised and the payments are within the budget boundaries and that monthly management reports are prepared</i></p> <p>2- <i>A high level of attention to details is required and being well-organised is a must.</i></p> <p>3- <i>I also need to ensure that the best value for money is implemented in all purchases and services.</i></p> <p>4- <i>I need to record every payment and be transparent and sensitive to every detail.</i></p>
Interviewee 7, Director General	<p>1- <i>The initial appointing of the correct people for the different positions. In the position of Director General it can be difficult as people in a higher position can try to place people into a position which they are unsuitable for. This can be because they are family members or friends. This can be a major challenge.</i></p> <p>2- <i>Another challenge is finance and budget keeping a tight rein on it and that the finance is released within the correct time frame.</i></p>
Interviewee 8, Architect	<p>1- <i>Finding the skilled and experienced people</i></p> <p>2- <i>Sometimes we face the problem that someone is assigned for a job because he is connected to the project sponsor or site manager</i></p>
Interviewee 9, Engineer	<p>1- <i>I need to be in contact with the site manager, the builders, the finance officer, the planning officer and assign everyone their own duties.</i></p> <p>2- <i>I need to be both scientific and friendly, authoritative and a good listener in my approach, I need to be a teacher, an engineer and a supervisor.</i></p>
Interviewee 10, planning officer	<p>1- <i>The challenges are that everything should be placed in the right place and basing everything in the right place and assigning duties to the appropriate people.</i></p>
Interviewee 11, procurement officer	<p>1- <i>The challenges are that related to centralisation and the difficulties we have in assigning duties to different people. We need to assign people from outside the city and this takes times and effort to finish the procedures</i></p> <p>2- <i>Distant cities do not receive the same attention as the capital. Projects are delayed and money is wasted for reasons such as</i></p>

	<i>these.</i>
Interviewee 12, Finance Officer	1- <i>We need to make sure that everything is well-organised and that we cover all the expenses and reports have transparently been prepared about all financial details and that the expenses are within the given budget and no arrears will be produced</i>

Table 3: Challenges of the Implementing stage:

The Participants	The Implementing stage challenges
Interviewee 1, Governor	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- <i>The challenges that face the implementing stage in the process of school building delivery are that whether the objectives of the projects that have been planned in the planning stage are realised</i></li> <li>2- <i>Meeting the requirements of construction and achieving the target within the specified timeframe and budget and in the least disruptive way</i></li> </ol>
Interviewee 2, Councillor	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- <i>Any gap or challenges in the Planning and Organising stages will be reflected in the Implementing stage</i></li> <li>2- <i>Funding can also be a challenge</i></li> </ol>
Interviewee 3, Educational officer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- <i>The stop of the fund flow without obvious reason and hence the process of actual building is paralysed</i></li> <li>2- <i>The lack of constructive communication between stakeholders and the basis of monitoring and assessment.</i></li> </ol>
Interviewee 4, Architect	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- <i>The challenges that face an architect in the implementing stage is when arrive at the implementing stage and you discover that you have been given incomplete information about the number of students, teachers, rooms and other things, that you have been given incomplete or may be wrong information about the funding, the distribution of funding and the organising the funding, and that you have been misinformed about the nature of the land and the environment.</i></li> </ol>
Interviewee 5, Procurement officer.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- <i>We need to ensure that we follow a strategy which is compatible with the objectives and the plan of the project. This means that we have to consider financing, cost, speed, quality the specific limitations of the project and risk.</i></li> </ol>
Interviewee 6, Finance Officer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- <i>The challenges at this stage are that any weakness in the planning or organising stage will be reflected and gaps appear and filling them will be too expensive</i></li> <li>2- <i>The challenge at this stage is also to ensure that the project will be completed on time because longer time after the due time means losing money.</i></li> <li>3- <i>Also being prepared for the unexpected in terms of finance</i></li> </ol>
Interviewee 7, Director General	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- <i>This stage reflects any kind of weakness in the</i></li> </ol>

	<p><i>plan</i></p> <p>2- Any delay can cause a major delay and disruption</p>
Interviewee 8, Architect	<p>1- It is a challenging time because it means that our plans and ideas will be brought to life and the challenge is that if there is any gap or weakness in the planning stage</p> <p>2- It will cost double to fill the gap and to repair weakness.</p> <p>3- This stage is the mirror that reflects the architect's mistakes and challenges.</p>
Interviewee 9, Engineer	<p>1- It is self- challenge and reflecting on the planning is needed in this stage</p>
Interviewee 10, planning officer	<p>1- The challenges are that any gap in the planning and organising stages will be revealed at this stage and a kind of feedback and assessment</p>
Interviewee 11, procurement officer	<p>1- We need to ensure that there is a strategy which helps us achieving our goals. This 1- We should be aware of the risks and what can be an obstacle early in the planning and organising stages.</p> <p>2- Finance is the base of any project so it should be planned and organised in an effective way.</p> <p>3- We need to achieve the equation of low cost and good quality</p> <p>4- We should learn how to prioritise essential things over less essential.</p>
Interviewee 12, Finance Officer	<p>1- This stage shows whether we have been doing the right thing.</p> <p>2- Errors can be fatal and cost a lot.</p> <p>3- This stage is a mixture of having a sense of achievement and feeling tense.</p>

Table 4: Challenges of the Legislative stage:

The Participants	The Legislative stage challenges
Interviewee 1, Governor	<i>We have to make sure that the land is problem-free and it does not belong to any specific side such as the agriculture or oil or that it is part of a plan for roads and transport. The search is time-consuming and it requires long procedures.</i>
Interviewee 2, Councillor	<i>1- A lot of ministries are involved: education, construction and housing, health, oil, transport.</i>
Interviewee 3, Educational officer	<i>1- Legislations are different now and more legislations are needed to cope with the changes that took place in Iraq 2- We need to transfer our legislations in a way to be compatible with the new society</i>
Interviewee 4, Architect	<i>1- There are a lot of legislations involved and I need to include all of them in the designing process. 2- The other challenge is that we are in a transitional period of time and new legislations are always made</i>
Interviewee 5, Procurement officer.	<i>1- The challenge is that there is a network of legislations that we need to be aware of and they should be enforced. These legislations are linked to laws of trading, international trading laws in case the suppliers are located abroad, customer perception, and health and safety.</i>
Interviewee 6, Finance Officer	<i>1- A lot of legislations and laws are involved in the financial side of a project</i>
Interviewee 7, Director General	<i>1- All the necessary documents would be drawn up by the legal department and procurement office</i>
Interviewee 8, Architect	<i>1- Designing a school building involves a lot of legislations and laws which need be taken into account for the safety and security of the building and its users. 2- There can be a clash between enforcing some legislations and the specified budget or what the sponsor plans to.</i>
Interviewee 9, Engineer	<i>1- We need all types of legislations and we need to make sure that they are enforced in the right time and place</i>
Interviewee 10, planning officer	<i>1- A lot of legislations are set for the project of building a school 2- These legislations are controversial because they are established for different times and circumstances. 3- A lot of cases at present do not have the appropriate legislations due to the circumstances that Iraq underwent.</i>

Interviewee 11, procurement officer	<p>1- We need to be aware of plenty of legislations and rules in order to achieve the project properly.</p> <p>2- The other challenge is that the legislations which we have at present came from an era which is different from the present time in terms of the concept of school building, relationships, and goals.</p> <p>3- We need updated legislations which cope with the present life and requirements.</p>
Interviewee 12, Finance Officer	<p>1- A lot of legislations do not suit the current time and do not cope with the needs of the country at this stage of transformation</p> <p>2- . Legislations have been created for another time and other circumstances. Time has changed and we need legislations that meet our current needs.</p> <p>3- Legislations should be updated from time to time and every city should have its special rules and laws because each one has a different context. What can be applied in Baghdad may not be so in another city.</p>



## 2- The Strengths and Challenges of every stage

Table 5: The Strengths and Challenges of the Planning Stage

The Participants	The Strengths of the Planning stage	The Challenges of the Planning stage
Interviewee 1, Governor	<p>1-It helps the employees to focus on the objectives and be aware of them</p> <p>2- It gives order and guide to the project.</p> <p>3- The stakeholders avoid disappointment and become ready for unexpected circumstances</p>	<p>1-The rigidity which means that the administration suggests policies and procedures and demand strict adherence to them in all circumstances.</p> <p>2-Planning is based on forecasts and predictions which may prove to be inexact in the future.</p> <p>3-Plans may not reflect the real life and world even if they are established in the most accurate and sophisticated methods.</p>
Interviewee 2, Councillor	<p>1-This stage help use look at the needs, the realistic needs and prioritise.</p> <p>2-We need to plan for the highly necessary needs.</p> <p>3-Planning enables us to see the priorities and work towards achieving the basic needs.</p>	<p>1-The weakness of school building delivery process at planning is how to be realistic and how to make balance between reality and your capability.</p> <p>2-Planning should take into account the limitations of the reality of Iraq in terms of funding, procedures and even how people feel about sending their children to school, particularly girls, in this era which is still not secure enough.</p>
Interviewee 3, Educational officer	<p>1-This stage of planning allows us the opportunity to place all the plans and brainstorm what is needed by the students and the teachers.</p> <p>2-This stage gives us hope that we are still surviving despite all the catastrophic circumstances which we</p>	<p>1-What creates the weakness in this stage are the repeated experiences which we have had about planning for many schools but no one has come to life.</p>

	<i>went through.</i>	
Interviewee 4, Architect	<p><i>1- In fact, to me planning is doing half the project on paper and getting ready to implement.</i></p> <p><i>2- You can plan and set aims and targets. It is a step towards making the plan come to life.</i></p> <p><i>3- Planning is also about using your knowledge as an architect and your skills as well.</i></p> <p><i>4- It is testing my ability to design according to given circumstances and budgets</i></p>	<p><i>1- The challenges of planning for me as an architect come from that fact that very little transparency can be found between stakeholders and ministries.</i></p> <p><i>2- Planning to build a school is a so sensitive matter which can be affected by a lot of things if there was no openness or directness.</i></p> <p><i>3- Planning which is based on non- understandable issues will lead to the failure of the project and the sequence of many disappointments in later stages.</i></p>
Interviewee 5, Procurement officer.	<p><i>1- The strengths of this stages are that the procurement officer becomes aware of the whole purchases in the project and makes sure that all products are registered with the procurement department with the necessary detail.</i></p>	<p><i>1- The challenges of this stage lay in the fact that a lot of negotiation skills are required and sometimes I need to negotiate with people who are ranked higher than me in the hierarchal pattern where formal language and formal relations dominate.</i></p> <p><i>2- Also, getting the right information about the budget and funds is also important because this makes it clear to me to perform in the light of the available budget.</i></p>
Interviewee 6, Finance Officer	<p><i>1- The strengths of this stage come from the facts that I manage all aspects of finance and accounting which are related to the school building project.</i></p> <p><i>2- I also process all the payments to consultants</i></p>	<p><i>1- Since I need a lot of contact with other people and organisation I face difficulties in communication because people are different and do not have the same perspectives.</i></p>

	<p>and contractors.</p> <p>3- I liaise with the school project and other professionals and companies.</p>	<p>2- A lot of pressure is placed on me to communicate with people who are not satisfied with the payments or who compare the payments of the project with other organisation payments.</p> <p>3- We need to quit many things in the project because the budget does not allow us. We take care of the necessary things only at this stage.</p>
Interviewee 7, Director General	<p>1- The strengths of the planning stage are having a well-structured plan.</p> <p>2- This gives order to the plan so each group/department and individual knows their position and what they have to do.</p> <p>3- The strength of the planning stage also gives guidance and direction to all participants in achieving the main goal which is the delivery of school buildings.</p>	<p>1- The weakness of the planning stage highlights the limitations and restrictions of the plan. The limitations can show that there are fewer schools being built than requested.</p> <p>2- The planning stage can also show the limitations of the budget which would mean that not everything was that originally requested will not necessarily be met.</p>
Interviewee 8, Architect	<p>1- It tells everything about the project and it prepares everyone to how to deal with unexpected circumstances.</p> <p>2- It is also about establishing the foundation and the better planning is the more smoothly the project runs.</p> <p>3- Planning is also about discovering the gaps in the project and getting ready to avoid or fill these gaps.</p>	<p>1- Planning can be hassle when there is a contradiction between how the architect believes should be and how the project sponsor and cost payer wants the project to be.</p> <p>2- Sometimes, non-specialised people interfere with my business as an architect and try to impose their opinion on me and the motive can be to save either money or space.</p>
Interviewee 9, Engineer	<p>1- At this stage knowledge</p>	<p>1- The engineer skills and</p>

	<i>and experience count and they are essential. I work purely as an engineer whose knowledge and skills are the only things needed.</i>	<i>knowledge cannot be enough when it comes to dealing with people who are involved in the same project and asking them to jobs and carry out instructions, in this case my knowledge and skills as an engineer do not count and I need interpersonal skills in communication.</i>
Interviewee 10, planning officer	<i>1-The strengths of the planning stage come from the fact that we deal with every hint about the planning applications such as validating, processing and assessing proposals for planning permission, negotiating planning conditions and obligations.</i>	<i>1-The main weakness is that since one of our main duties is to negotiate solutions where problems occur and provide advice to members of the public and community groups, so we need a lot of communication skills and ability to establish a dialogue for gathering ideas. 2-We still lack the culture of negotiating and accepting different opinions.</i>
Interviewee 11, procurement officer	<i>1-The strengths of this stage are that the procurement officer is in control of everything and has all the details about products and suppliers. 2-The procurement officer also has the ability to negotiate the best deals with the suppliers and keep the best relationships with them.</i>	<i>1-The challenges of this stage is the centralisation of everything in this country. Everything should go through the capital channels and then come back to us which is a waste of time. 2- We need the permission from the centre to do anything so the difficulties start from the planning stage.</i>
Interviewee 12, Finance Officer	<i>1-In this stage policies are set and their enforcement is monitored. This requires the involvement of stakeholders in the project where everyone contributes to the preparation of budgets, payments and contracts</i>	<i>1-Challenges come from that we cannot control the budget. We cannot compare ourselves with ideal situations. 2-What is required now is a school that protect children and shelter them from the dangers of being</i>

		<i>in street and being easy victims for gangs and violence.</i>
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Table 6: The Strengths and Challenges of the Organising Stage

The Participants	The Strengths of the Organising stage	The Challenges of the Organising stage
Interviewee 1, Governor	<p><i>1- All the project's stages, and activities are identified and assigned to each team member and mapping them to a timeline to measure key dates that are used to keep track of work progress.</i></p> <p><i>2-These areas are so important because they reflect the progress of a project.</i></p>	<p><i>1-The disadvantages of this stage is that any lack of transparency in dealing with finance or timeline may lead to the failure of the project and the loss of resources.</i></p> <p><i>2-Appointing unqualified people will also have its negative consequences as well as not being realistic in terms of deadlines, cost, and quality.</i></p>
Interviewee 2, Councillor	<p><i>1-In the organising stage the vision of the project becomes clear and the atmosphere becomes ready to start implementing.</i></p> <p><i>2-This stage is about working how to prepare for the actual construction process. Everyone should be aware of their roles to play and be responsible for fulfilling this role.</i></p>	<p><i>1-In Iraq, there are a number of limitations for this stage which are related to the nature of hierarchal authority.</i></p> <p><i>2-A dialogue is not usually established between persons.</i></p> <p><i>3- In Iraq working together is not available in the sense that everyone want to work separately to get credit from the higher-ranked persons.</i></p> <p><i>4-Organising stage needs collaboration among the stakeholder which is a matter not possible in Iraq.</i></p>
Interviewee 3, Educational officer	<p><i>1-Everything is made clear and explained starting from project management planning, cost management, time management, quality management and contract and safety management.</i></p> <p><i>2- The whole project is made explained and defined and the challenges and</i></p>	<p><i>1-What creates the challenges in this stage are the fact that we are not used to work as a team and we all have the competitive spirit rather than collaborative one.</i></p> <p><i>2-We all need to prove we are good to those who are ranked higher than us.</i></p>

	<i>strengths of the project become understood.</i>	<i>3-We do not collaborate because we are afraid that the others steal our success.</i>
Interviewee 4, Architect	<p><i>1-Organising stage is about distributing the roles for everyone to perform. It is about money management, engineering issues management, and other managements with other stakeholders.</i></p> <p><i>2-It involves that everyone understands their role and how they contribute to the success of the project.</i></p>	<p><i>1-The challenges of this organisation stage come from the fact that a lot of people are not very enthusiastic to do things. They are frustrated from the current situation of Iraq and believe that there is a lot to do and they do not have the energy.</i></p> <p><i>2-People are overwhelmed and they think these conflicts destroyed them and their ability to do something.</i></p> <p><i>3-The period after the conflict is so difficult as people are full of sadness and hopelessness.</i></p> <p><i>4-Building schools and countries need hard work and cooperation.</i></p>
Interviewee 5, Procurement officer.	<p><i>1-The strength of the organising stage is that it enables me to ensure that everything is organised as far as the purchasing of products and services are concerned.</i></p> <p><i>2-I am also enabled to recognise how far the policies and procedures which I have adopted in purchasing products, contacting and negotiating with suppliers are all good.</i></p>	<p><i>1-The challenges of this stage are that there are a set of things in terms of procurement which are out of my control.</i></p> <p><i>2-Sometimes I face a difficulty with suppliers abroad due to the weakness of the Internet connection and social media, and also delivery times are not accurate because of the circumstances of Iraq.</i></p> <p><i>3-Sometimes commitment with the promise suppliers have given is lacked</i></p>
Interviewee 6, Finance Officer	<i>1-The strengths of this organising stage are that it prepares the financial background of the project and makes it clear where the project is financially going and what can be</i>	<i>1-As we are passing through a time of uncertainty in Iraq, a lot of things which are unpredicted may occur such as stopping the funding in the mid of the project or suppliers do not</i>

	<p><i>achieved within the given budget and funds.</i></p> <p><i>2-It is about purchasing and paying for the products and services which will create and make the school building a reality.</i></p>	<p><i>keep their word because of one reason or another.</i></p> <p><i>2- The challenges of the organising stage come from the fact that I as a finance officer cannot guarantee everything because I do not have the initiative of everything.</i></p> <p><i>3-We are ruled by a hierarchal patterns and a bureaucratic mentality so I cannot pretend to have control over a lot of things which are within the boundaries of my interest.</i></p>
Interviewee 7, Director General	<p><i>1-Each person involved will know their position and what is expected from them. This is the strength of the school building delivery process.</i></p> <p><i>2-Each group and individual have their plan of work and when they all complete their allocated task, the whole process comes together to create the school building.</i></p>	<p><i>1-Weakness can be that unqualified people are not capable of working/managing the positions that they are in.</i></p> <p><i>2-This causes difficulties as their incompetency is destructive in the case of the time line, cost and the morale of the work force.</i></p>
Interviewee 8, Architect	<p><i>1-It is helpful to distribute jobs and duties to the persons involved in the project. Funding is given to finance people, delivery to procurement people and so on.</i></p> <p><i>2-It takes the burden off the architect because he has not to do everything.</i></p> <p><i>3-It also shows the skill of the architect to find the right people in the right place.</i></p>	<p><i>1-The nature of our society can be a weakness in the organising stage in the sense that people might do a job they are not skilled in or because they know one of the stakeholders.</i></p> <p><i>2-Also, some people in our society do not accept directions or instructions and they prefer to do what they want to do because they think it is humiliating to do what other people tell them to do.</i></p> <p><i>3- The culture of dialogue is missed in our society and we need to build it if we want to succeed.</i></p>

Interviewee 9, Engineer	<p><i>1-The strengths of this stage are that you team up people and ask everyone to do the right work. It is about establishing a network which consists of different people for different jobs.</i></p>	<p><i>1-Dealing with a network of people is not easy. You do not expect that all these people have the same attitudes and perspectives.</i></p> <p><i>2-Different attitudes may lead to clashes and that what makes organisation stage difficult and challenging.</i></p>
Interviewee 10, planning officer	<p><i>1-The strengths are that the planning officer has the advantage of deciding many issues and putting things in the right place.</i></p> <p><i>2-The strengths of this stage also are that all the networks that establish the project are controlled by the planning officer.</i></p>	<p><i>1-The challenges of this stage are facing people from different types and assigning them their duties.</i></p> <p><i>2-Negotiating with different people is a hard thing and it can lead to clashes if dialogue is not established. To negotiate is a learned behaviour which we need some time to excel in.</i></p>
Interviewee 11, procurement officer	<p><i>1-The strengths of the organising stage are that it enables me to ensure that everything is organised as far as the purchasing of products and services are concerned.</i></p> <p><i>2-I am also enabled to recognise how far the policies and procedures which I have adopted in purchasing products, contacting and negotiating with suppliers are all good.</i></p>	<p><i>1-I feel that sometimes I am not control everything because I cannot access suppliers and I cannot contact them due to the weakness of the net connection and the delay in mail delivery.</i></p> <p><i>2-People are not very encouraged to deal with projects in distant cities because this is risky. I really feel that</i></p> <p><i>3-I cannot control anything which makes me demotivated.</i></p>
Interviewee 12, Finance Officer	<p><i>1-The strengths of this organising stage are that everything about finance and the budget becomes clear and everything becomes decided in the light of the budget such as the given budget such as contracts, suppliers, worker payment and delivery.</i></p>	<p><i>1-There are two issues. First, since the country is passing a transformational stage, it is a time of uncertainty and no one can predict the future.</i></p> <p><i>2-Budgets can change or stop so we have to always be ready for alternatives.</i></p> <p><i>3-The other problem is that</i></p>



		<i>the centralisation of everything. We have to get everything ready from the capital and which causes a waste of time and money. Decentralisation can solve a lot of our problems.</i>
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Table 7: The Strengths and Challenges of the Implementing Stage

The Participants	The Strengths of the Implementing stage	The Challenges of the Implementing stage
Interviewee 1, Governor	<p><i>1-An implementation stage is the stage where the plans become reality.</i></p> <p><i>2-Implementing projects give the end users the opportunity to access better services and environment.</i></p> <p><i>3-Success stories and experiences in implementing plans can be shared by different community and cities which allows the development of school building.</i></p>	<p><i>1-Bad financial planning can lead to the disruption of the whole project in the implementation stage.</i></p> <p><i>2-Ani evidence of corruption can have a disastrous consequence on implementing the project.</i></p> <p><i>3- A friction may be created between the community and the implementers regarding</i></p>
Interviewee 2, Councillor	<p><i>1-Plans can be brought to life and the dream becomes true and the end users of the project will feel happy to see the concrete evidence of bringing the project to reality.</i></p> <p><i>2-Children and parents and the community will feel hopeful to see a school building being established in the neighbourhood.</i></p> <p><i>3-Iraq needs the scenes of re building spread everywhere because people need to feel that life is still on.</i></p>	<p><i>1-The challenges of the school building delivery process at the implementing stage are derived from that fact that any gap in the previous stages will impact negatively the school building delivery process and hinder it.</i></p> <p><i>2-The collaboration of all stakeholders is essential to fill all the gaps expected in this stage.</i></p> <p><i>3-Failure of communication about the project and every issue in it will lead to the failure of achieving the projects.</i></p> <p><i>4-Bureaucracy is the basic problem and the hierarchal relationships among members of department</i></p>

		<i>and organisation.</i>
Interviewee 3, Educational officer	<p><i>1- Plans are achieved, everyone sees the outcome of planning and managing and the dream is about to be true.</i></p> <p><i>2-A sense of achievement is there and it is priceless.</i></p>	<p><i>1-The weakness in this stage lays in the fact that any mismanagement or lack of transparency will be reflected at this stage and it is not correctable.</i></p> <p><i>2-Funding is a nightmare especially nowadays with these tied circumstances.</i></p> <p><i>3-We do not feel relaxed till we see the actual building standing and children are coming into it. It is a hard time but we learn from our experience.</i></p>
Interviewee 4, Architect	<p><i>1-The strengths of the implementing stage are the strengths of the planning stage. Good planning leads usually to good implementation.</i></p> <p><i>2-The stage of implementation, to me, is the stage where my ability as an architect is tested together with the ability of the other stakeholders.</i></p> <p><i>3-It is a discovery of our ability, skills and knowledge to design a school.</i></p>	<p><i>1-The challenges of the implementing stage come from the fact that as this stage is a test of our strength,</i></p> <p><i>2-It is also a test of our challenges.</i></p>
Interviewee 5, Procurement officer.	<p><i>1-The strengths of this stage come from the fact that in the implementing stage we make sure that the principle of quality was applied by contractors and consultants who work in the project.</i></p>	<p><i>1-The weakness of the implementing stage comes from the fact that we need also to ensure that quality was applied in the service providers: how enthusiastic they are to perform their duties, how willing they are to make the project a success and how to stimulate them and create motivation for them to work hard and participate in the building process of their country.</i></p>

		<p>2- People are tired because of the wars and the economic situations and they need a lot of stimulating and encouraging to drive them to work hard and in a high quality.</p>
Interviewee 6, Finance Officer	<p>1-This stage gives me a sense of achievement and makes me feel that what I have planned for is achieved.</p> <p>2- I also check my experience and skills and it tells me what I have missed and I need to do it properly next time.</p>	<p>1-The challenges of this stage come from the fact that any gap in planning and organising will affect the implementing of the project.</p> <p>2- The unpredicted issues can also hamper the progress of the project if we are not prepared for.</p> <p>3-The other weakness is that funding and budget may be made limited or even cut.</p>
Interviewee 7, Director General	<p>1-The strengths of the implementing stage is that it shows that all the planning and discussions are coming to fruition</p> <p>2-. The reality of the plan in paper is actual coming an actual solid structure of a building.</p>	<p>1-The weakness of the implementing stage is when unqualified workers and corruption appears.</p> <p>2-This can have a devastating effect. This can cause delays, distrust and friction between the departments involved and the local communities</p>
Interviewee 8, Architect	<p>1-It is the stage that gives the sense of achievement to everyone took part in the planning stage.</p> <p>2-This is the beginning of completion and everyone is waiting to see the harvest.</p> <p>3-The images of children starting school in the new school give a good feeling.</p>	<p>1-The weakness of this stage comes from the fact that persons may not be working as a team and then they are waiting to catch other people's mistakes in case they are found.</p> <p>2-On the hand, the same people may attribute the success of this stage to their individual or personal efforts. In this culture, the success and the partial or complete failure are related to the architect alone, while planning,</p>

		<i>organising and implementing stages are a shared responsibility.</i>
Interviewee 9, Engineer	<i>1-In the implementing stage I see all my plans are brought life. It is the harvest time and we all did our best for the project to succeed. As an engineer I feel so proud.</i>	<i>1-Things that are away from being an engineer are a challenge. When there is not group or team work, a lot of points of weakness will appear and we need all to contain the mistakes.</i> <i>2-The biggest challenge is when in the implementation stage we need to modify the plan or any building-related issues because of the decreased funds or any other reason.</i>
Interviewee 10, planning officer	<i>1- It is the stage of achieving what we have planned for and the project is born.</i>	<i>1-We are very tense that a mistake may appear in planning and organising and then we have to do things again at this advanced stage of the project</i>
Interviewee 11, procurement officer	<i>1-The strengths of this stage are that it can make us ensure that we have achieved quality in every step and that we could balance between low cost and good quality.</i> <i>2-It also shows the appropriateness of the design, equipment, furniture, services to the project and its goals.</i> <i>3- It also reveals how effective the funding and finance management is and how appropriate the building for future requirements.</i>	<i>1-The challenges come from the same source where the strengths come from. I mean implementing stage shows the gaps and errors in both planning and organising stages.</i> <i>2-Errors at this stage are costly and they require a lot of effort and money to repair. We are an exhausted people and we need one push forward so we need good implementing stage to get a sense of achievement that makes us feel hopeful.</i>
Interviewee 12, Finance Officer	<i>1-This stage makes me feel proud and that I have done something important. When they start the actual construction, I feel hopeful and also that a lot is going to be achieved</i>	<i>1-The challenges of this stage come from the appearance of unexpected things that have not been planned in the planning stage.</i>

Table 8: The Strengths and Challenges of the Legislative Stage

The Participants	The Strengths of the Legislative stage	The Challenges of the Legislative stage
Interviewee 1, Governor	<p>1-The advantages of the legislative stage are ensuring that the process of school building is taking place in a legal way and it ensures the safety of everyone involved.</p> <p>2- This stage also enables us to avoid problems with any ministry or department.</p> <p>3-This stage should be activated at an early stage of the process of school building to avoid any disappointments at a more advanced stage of the building process.</p>	<p>1-The problem which may face us is that there is that there is no transparency and easy access to all the files and documents.</p> <p>2- We may think that everything is OK but then we discover that the land is connected with another plan and that it belongs to another department</p>
Interviewee 2, Councillor	<p>1-The strength of the legislative stage is that it enables the stakeholder to recognise all the laws that should be enforced in the project.</p> <p>2-It also guarantees the legal side of the project and makes its establishment lawful and up to the standards.</p>	<p>1-In Iraq, the legislative stage is problematic because of the involvement of many sides and every side works alone without the co-ordination with the other.</p> <p>2-The other weakness is that legislations are very rigid and they are not flexible in a way that takes into account the contextual circumstances of a project.</p>
Interviewee 3, Educational officer	<p>1-The strengths come from the requirements that the school is in harmony with the laws.</p> <p>2-We need to create many legislations to be consistent with the new era Iraq is living in now: the disabled people's right to be included is a form of democracy and so is taking special needs into account.</p>	<p>1-The challenges of this stage come from that fact that inserting new legislations is not as easy as it looks.</p> <p>2-It requires changing many social, political and cultural issues. For example to enforce the legislation of inclusive education we need to change how people look at and treat disabled people or people with impairment.</p>
Interviewee 4, Architect	1- The strengths of this stage	1-The challenges of the

	<p>are that you understand what to do to stay safe, secure and healthy</p> <p>2- Legislations are created to protect human beings. As an architect I need to understand what should be done and what should not when designing a school project such as the distribution of windows, doors, gates, toilets and washing facilities, general health and safety, fire safety, lighting, water supplies, and outdoor space.</p>	<p>legislative stage are that receiving incomplete information or not covering all the areas related to the project by legislations.</p> <p>2-The other weakness is that some people are not keen to work according to legislations and they pay less attention to them to save money.</p>
Interviewee Procurement officer.	<p>5, 1-The strengths of this stage are that everything is organised and identified so the procurement officer and the other employees feel secure that these laws and legislations provide protection and safety for the project.</p> <p>2- My job is appoint roles and duties for the other employees so I need to be aware of the legislations that regulate relationships.</p>	<p>1- When your work involves contacting people, you expect to face a lot of problems. Some problems cannot be solved by appealing to legislations or laws. Dialogue and communication are the best way when you face a problem with a person who does not want to take instructions for example, or another person who shows a different opinion and sticks to it. There are many difficulties that face me but I try to use dialogue and talking.</p>
Interviewee 6, Finance Officer	<p>1-The legislative stage helps in estimating the cost of work since the beginning of the project.</p> <p>2-This estimation should be as realistic as possible.</p> <p>3-The sources of funding should be determined. The people who are in charge of the financial issues have feeling of comfort that the work is continuous and not under threat.</p> <p>4-Allocating part of the budget as salaries for</p>	<p>1-The legislative stage is considered as a foundation of the project so it requires a lot of expenses and there is still no implementing yet.</p> <p>2- It is about paying money while the real construction has not started yet.</p> <p>3-Using experts and professional also requires great expenses and the project is still in the planning stage and construction has not started.</p>

	<i>workers and other employees give them the feeling of security and that their incomes are safe.</i>	
Interviewee 7, Director General	<i>1-All the necessary documents would be drawn up by the legal department and procurement office.</i>	
Interviewee 8, Architect	<i>1-The strengths of this stage come from the fact that applying legislations bring safety and security to the project and when applying these legislations, stakeholders get the feeling that they have done something that protects people and carries out laws.</i>	<i>1-The challenges appear when there is a contradiction between some profits of stakeholders and enforcing the legislations in the project. 2-Ethical issues are a priority over money. To some people ignoring some legislations for the sake of the success of the project is not a big deal. This is not the culture we need in Iraq which is trying to build democracy and freedom. 3- Safety starts from clean fresh water to strong and well-build pillars and walls.</i>
Interviewee 9, Engineer	<i>1-Every legislation is done for a reason and everything needs a legislation to justify it. It is a process of finding a justification for every issue.</i>	<i>1- The challenges of this stage come from the clash that happens between the legislation and the real world needs. For example, in a classroom only a limited number of children or students is allowed. But in the situation, the real situation of Iraq in financial terms, we need to comply with the real world requirements and build classrooms that accommodate more than the specified number.</i>
Interviewee 10, planning officer	<i>1-The strengths are that everything done has a matching legislation 2-Regulations are applied so that we make sure that the project is safe and secure.</i>	<i>1-The challenges are that as I have mentioned above we need new legislations that cope with the new circumstances and situations.</i>

		<p>2-We need legislations for special needs children facilities and disabled children and teachers as well as children whose first language is not Arabic.</p>
Interviewee 11, procurement officer	<p>1-Understanding legislation makes you feel safe and that you are doing the right and safe things.</p> <p>2- Legislations protect the project and make you feel that you are meeting what is required of you. When you have clear legislations you achieve equality among employees in terms of appointment, payment, holidays, and treatments.</p> <p>3-You also feel that your worry is less when you apply legislations.</p>	<p>1-Legislations need to be updated in Iraq to cope with the post-conflict period of time.</p> <p>2-People need to feel that something has changed and they deserve to have legislations that do not remind them of the hard times they have had for a long time.</p>
Interviewee 12, Finance Officer	<p>1-The strengths are that knowing legislations can be a positive thing because we know why things are placed in they are.</p> <p>2-Meeting the legislation gives a sense of achievement to me and I know that I am doing the right thing.</p>	<p>1-Sometimes we are stuck in the sense that we do not know what to do with certain issues where applying the legislations is difficult and cannot be realistic. Legislations should be flexible and appropriate to the context.</p>